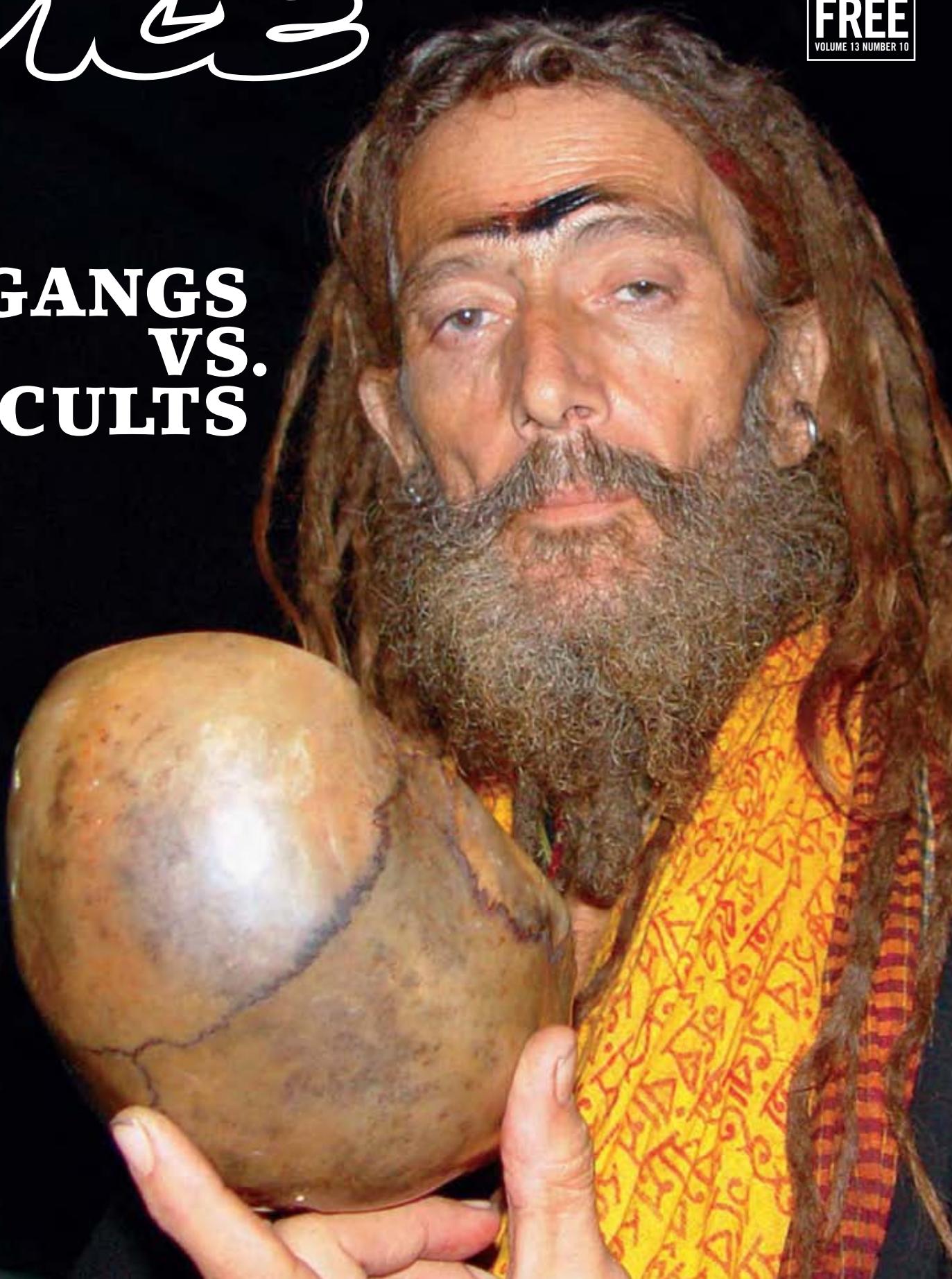


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VOLUME 13 NUMBER 10



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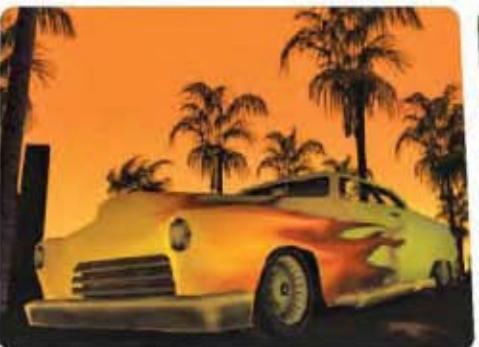


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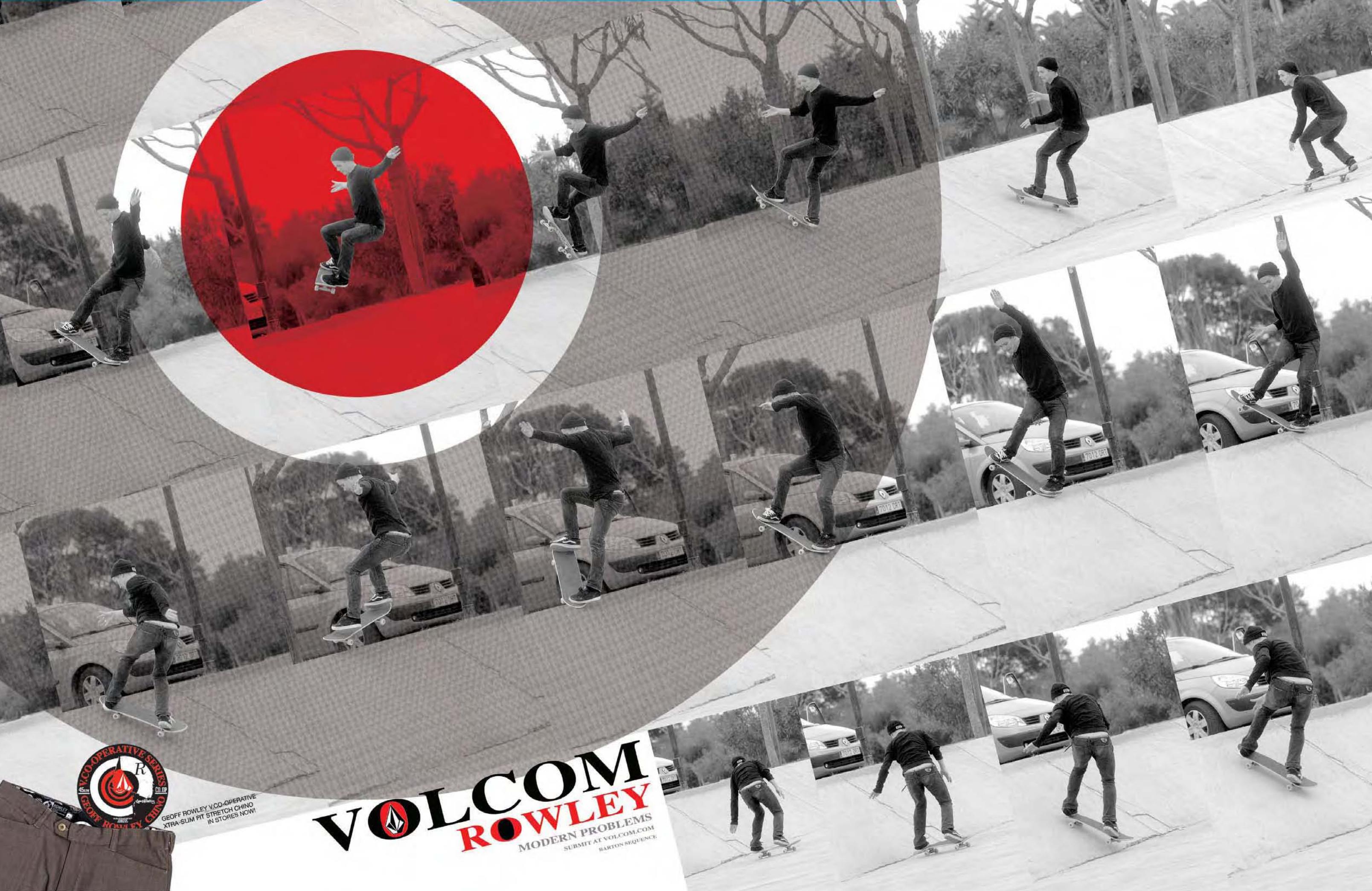
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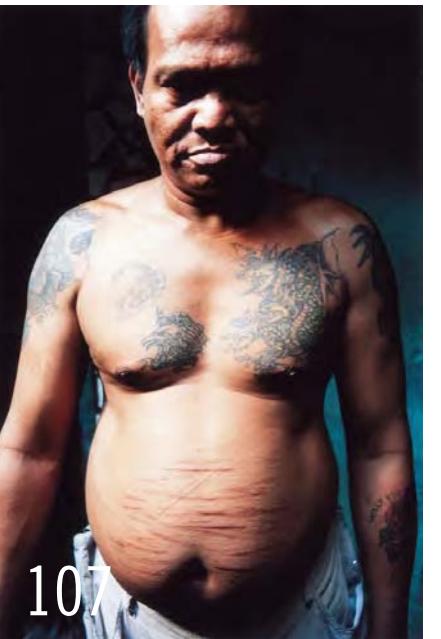
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An Introduction to Kapal Nath



The Coffin Cheaters are a homegrown Aussie motorcycle club that's been around since 1970. The police say they're in cahoots with other gangs like the Outlaws, and we've seen them racing the Hell's Angels. Even so, you'll never see two clubs openly fraternizing. Jimmy, on the left, says, "Why did I join the Coffin Cheaters? Freedom, man—not havin' to listen to anybody tell me what to do."

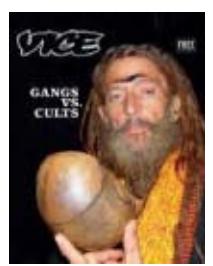


Photo by Michael Yon
Photo by Roe Ethridge
This issue has two covers, therefore it is collectible and if you don't get both, you don't really love us.



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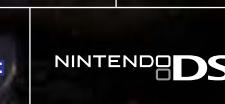
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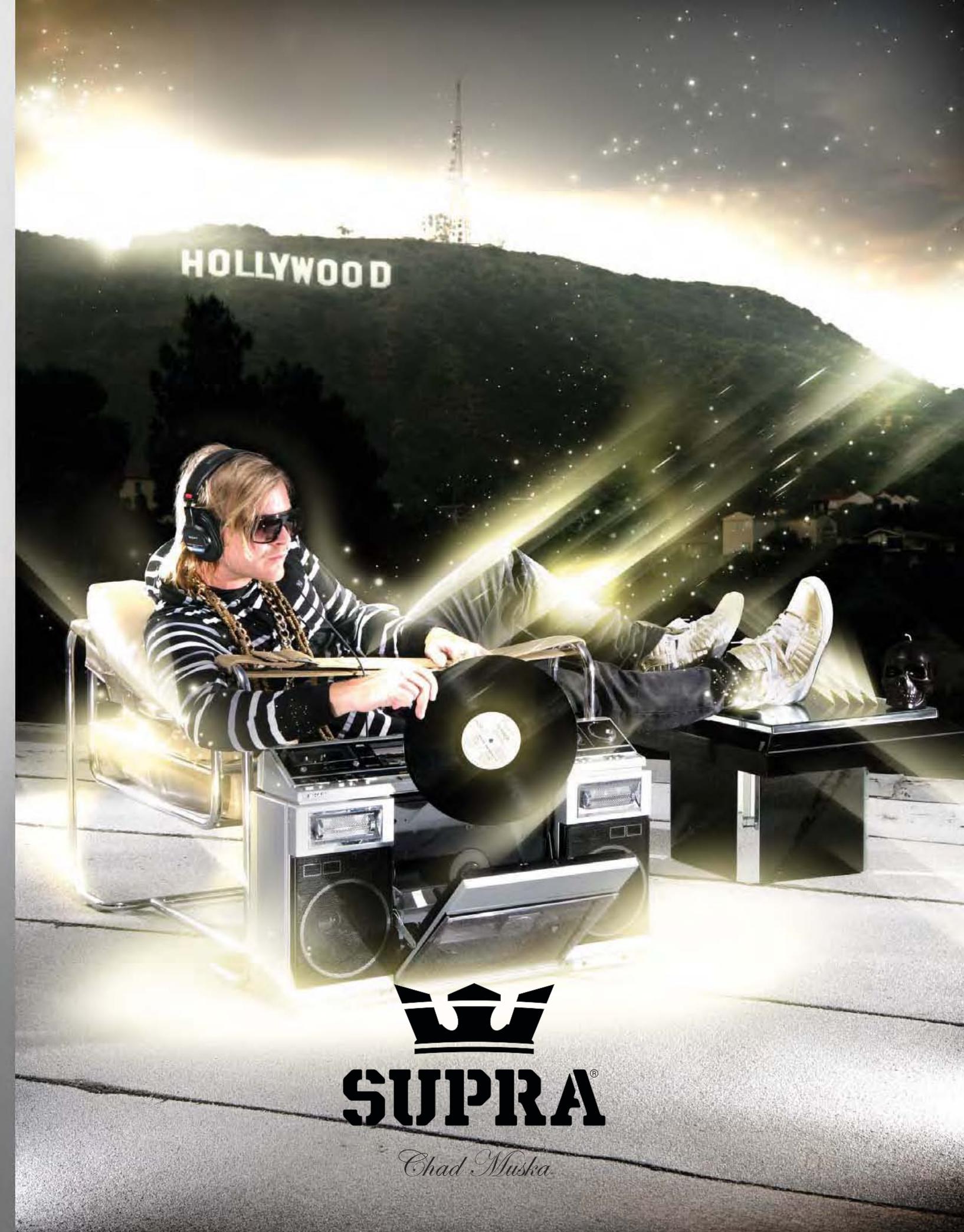
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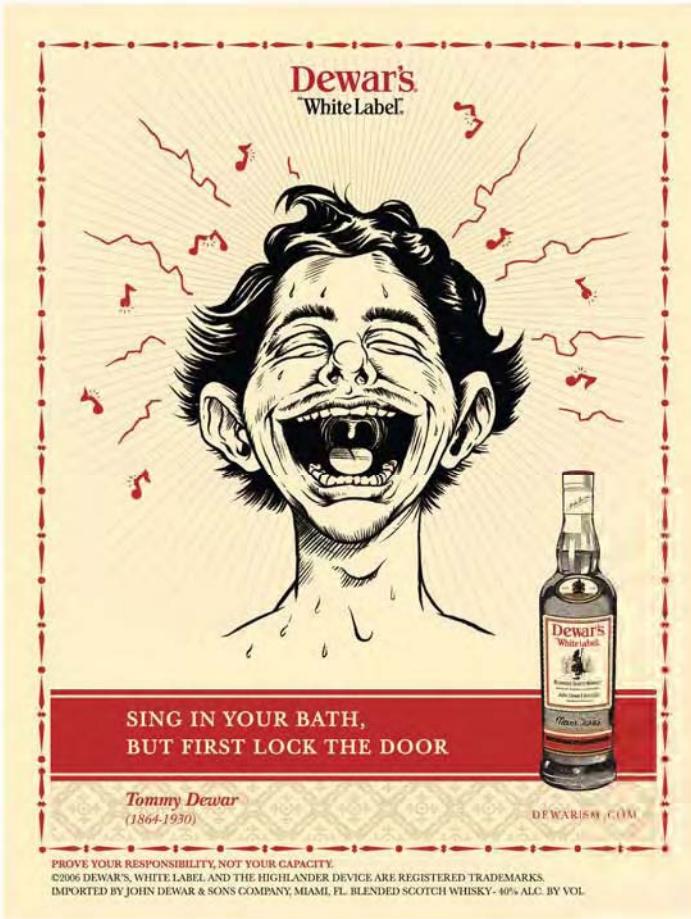
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 Jason Lee over the Argyle fence.

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EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



J PENRY came to New York from Alabama, then slid right into success in his chosen field of drawing stuff. J does a lot of pro bono work for bands like Blood on the Wall and TK Webb, so he's used to drawing people dressed like they're crazy. For this issue we decided to tap into this expertise and have him doodle some of the things that people in gangs and cults like to wear.

See DRESS THE PART!, p. 68

BEN WHITE is a smart writer type who got lured in by the dark side of people like Jim Goad and Harry Crews. Now he's a walking, talking anomaly: A man who graduated from Columbia, works at FSG, but would still kill himself to write for *Vice*. Check out his interviews with gangsters from the 50s, 60s, and 70s in this issue. The guy's a fucking natural.

See VICE FASHION, p. 82

T.D. CHAN was born in Seattle and graduated from Yale, where she spent most of her time programming robots, researching artificial intelligence, and speaking French, German, Cantonese, and Mandarin. Now she lives in New York and plays keyboard in a couple of those bands that are for nerds who work at Tonic. She's written for a pile of magazines like *Paper* and *Time Out New York*.

See FALUN GONG AND ME, p. 52

MICHAEL YON is the kind of guy you wish you could find out was your long-lost dad. He was one of the youngest people ever to become a Green Beret, he's an incredible writer and photo-journalist who covers the Iraq War (he's been embedded with the US Army in Mosul since 2004) with a zealot's passion, and he's even a former bodyguard to Michael Jackson. Yon has been there and done that so much that the most dangerous and crazy adventure you will ever have is a little baby hiccup to him.

Michael's work has been featured in magazines and newspapers around the globe, from the *New York Times* to the *London Sunday Times*, and from the *Weekly Standard* to *Jane* (the defense industry magazine of choice, not the one for chicks), and he keeps a really up-to-date blog you can check out at www.michaelyon-online.com. "I'll talk to anyone, any time, anywhere, who is interested in hearing about what is really happening on the ground in Iraq," Michael says.

Wherever you're going next, Michael, please take us with you.

See AMERICAN AGHORI, p. 112



In the Stories Issue, we published an article by Stephanie Foo that some could perceive to imply that she had lost her virginity to a 12-year-old boy. The actual meaning of the piece was that she lost her virginity to a man who had not had sex SINCE he was 12.

Vice deeply regrets any misunderstanding that this article may have caused.

ISRAEL TEASE

Dear *Vice*,

So you take a couple of Palestinian kids, show them all the awesome crap Jewish kids get and take for granted, then pry them away from PlayStation heaven and dump them back in their overcrowded slum and you're doing the world a service? What happens in seven years when those kids start piecing together an explanation for why John-John and his sister were entitled to so much more fun and start linking it up with grown-up toys like land and travel restrictions? As far as these bros are concerned, you have basically done the hardest part of Hamas's job—all that's left is to fit them for suicide belts, get some martyr glamour shots in, and they're ready to make an active reprisal for their childhood deprivation.

Thanks but no thanks,
JARED KENT
Washington, DC

But maybe that's what we wanted to happen... just kidding. Look, not having a PlayStation of their own is the least of the emotional open wounds Palestinian kids are going to have to deal with as they become adults. As far as we're concerned, we showed them a good time and that's that.

NONFICTION WORKSHOP

Dear *Vice*,

I'm not sure who to send this to but I'm sure my story more than fits the criteria. Let me know what you think.

"I Am a Male Date Rape Survivor"

When I was in college I was all about pills, pills, pills. Then again who isn't? My problem was that I didn't really care what it was or how much. I didn't ask questions just as long as it was going to fuck me to shreds and I trusted the supplier. I guess this is what makes this story so fucked-up.

One night I was chilling at the bar with my friends when this dude I know, Drunk Boy, who was in the world-renowned date-rape fraternity Tau Kappa Epsilon, approaches me and asks if I want a dose. I'm looking at the pill and thinking E, Watsons, maybe Oxycontin, who knows? I was on my third Manhattan at that bar alone. So I see the little white jewel in his hand and I ask him if he's had any yet and he pulls out another gem, pops it, and says something to the effect of, "Yeah, yeah dude just take it. You're going to fucking bug out."

Liking this disclaimer and coming from a man named Drunk Boy, how was I to resist? So Drunk Boy drops the pill in my drink, bottoms up, and within minutes I'm completely blacked out. I remember having that numb feeling of being there but not there. I remember trying to speak but only thinking the words in my head. My friends recall me sitting at the bar looking utterly distant and not being able to speak.

Such is the beauty of being on Rohypnol, also known as the date rape drug. To this day I still don't understand what was going through Drunk's mind. I'm a dude. Unfortunately this isn't the end of the story. How I awoke is.

I woke up next to probably the most hideous creation ever. I'm not insensitive, I know girls come in all shapes and sizes and can be beautiful on the inside. This one however was missing teeth, had prison tats, stretch marks, and her room looked and smelled like a really bad head shop. The kind of head shop that only sells plastic bongs, Kiss of Mint condoms, and patchouli oil.

Although I can't recall a thing, we made love that night. I don't know how, I don't know if I came or was even hard for it, but there was a condom still attached to me when I was getting dressed. I tried to get out as fast I could without waking whatever that thing was. I ran all the way from the east side of Buffalo, NY, to my apartment on the west side.

When I got back to my apartment, my friends filled me in on the truth about the previous night. Apparently this chick knew Drunk Boy and asked him if he would give me Rohypnol so she could eventually take me home and have her way with me. He thought it would be funny and I'm sure still does. When I go out now I follow the same rules of any girl on the college scene: Never take anything if you don't know exactly what it is, never drink something someone else has given you, and use the buddy system no matter what!

JESSE GADDIS
Binghamton, NY

This has happened to every man at least once, only it's usually because of being blacked out on booze. Relax. It's a rite of passage, just like having AIDS-xiety (that's when you get tested for HIV and spend the next three days going through a mental Rolodex of your horrid past, convinced you're dying until they tell you that you're negs).

A CRY IN THE WILDERNESS

Dear *Vice*,

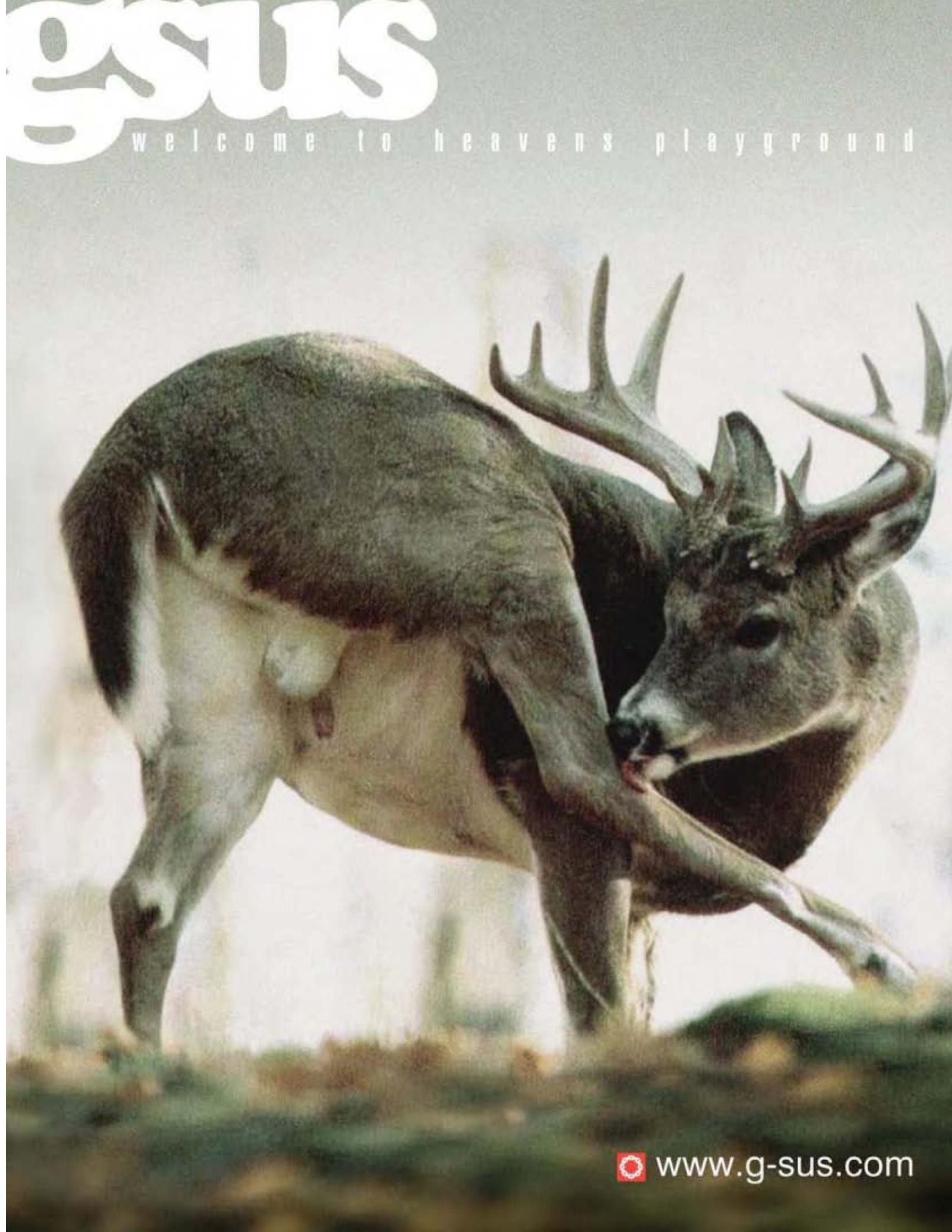
I'm sure this is redundant, but I hope you guys/girls at *Vice* don't take stock in about 98 percent of the "opinions" people seem to feel a burning desire to smear across your website. I'm not trying to kiss your ass—there are occasionally some pretty awful articles or knee-jerk opinions, but really. I mean, they all need to get off their fucking asses and do something instead of chirping from the sidelines. The last time there was a magazine that was this worthwhile, warts and all, was... um, never, so how about not reading it if it's soooo boring or not as good or core or whatever? It's shit like that that makes me really hate my generation.

MARC BOYER
Via email

INSPIRED BY THE SMALL

Dear *Vice*,

I've been sick for a week now with sore throat and earache and TMJ or whatever it is that makes me clench my teeth in my sleep. Tonight I was coughing up gray curdled snot and popping painkillers for my aching jaw and vitamin C tablets for the immune kick and didn't want to see or be seen by anyone. I was sitting on the couch surfing channels and eating jumbo sacks of Old Dutch ketchup chips and drinking lukewarm Pepsi straight out of the two-liter bottle when I chanced upon a TV special about "little people," aka "dwarves" as they say we can call them. It included one dwarf guy from Boston who became a husband and a father and a well-respected pediatric orthopedic surgeon but back in the day had to put up with tons of bullshit growing up around nothing but skeptical peers and facing constant rejection from bigoted medical school boards just to finally get to where he is today—which seems to be a pretty nice life if you could see what the guy has now. And then the other story, which TOTALLY killed me, was about a dwarf girl who grew up in a wonderful home with a great family and had a happy childhood and became a fairly successful and independent and hardworking teacher/role-model for disadvantaged youth and although her life was good and became something meaningful to



VICE MAIL

others the one thing she never had growing up that she desperately wanted was a nice boyfriend who would simply love her and treat her well. At one point she recalls asking her girlfriends back in high school if she'd ever get to have that for herself and of course her friends tell her, "Yes, yes, you'll meet someone," but you can tell they were probably just feeding her that painfully doubtful support friends dish out. But now as an adult we are introduced to the guy she's been seeing for a year or so and although he's not officially "little" he's about 4'10", so he kind of understands her bitch and really seems to like her and if he kneels on his knees they're the same height which is pretty precious. So flash forward another year to her 28th birthday when everyone is giving her presents and he's looking all embarrassed cause he didn't buy her a gift to unwrap and tells her that his present to her was the haircut she got the day before that he paid for and her family is totally unimpressed with that and she's kind of trying to save face for the camera and not show her disappointment at his being inconsiderate of her feelings even though he had totally fucked up her birthday gift the year before too. But next thing you know he says, "Well, I guess I have something else to give you, but it's not much of a birthday present," and he pulls out a little velvet box and nervously proposes to her while her little tiny hands start shaking and she's half-sobbing and whimpering because she can't believe this is actually happening to her since, she hadn't imagined this day would ever come at all. At this point I'm totally losing it on the couch crying puddles and laughing aloud with joy at 5 AM all by myself thinking, "This is the best thing I have ever fucking seen." I toss my half-stale ripple chips aside and slap on a sweat suit and sneaks and for the first time in months go out jogging down empty streets grinning with a yearlong binge of booze and smokes working itself out of my system until I feel wide awake, clean, clear, and content just flying down the streets feeling totally overdosed on goodlife and fuck-yeahs that seem to go on forever. But now I'm having trouble winding down. I guess I'll have a shower and some tea and a little oatmeal and get ready to make this day fucking count for something substantial, cause if a couple of midgets can get out of their rut and stand tall why can't I, right?

Riding the rainbow luge,
BRADLEY JONASSON
Winnipeg, MB

Don't forget that "little people" can be creepy too, just like anyone else. One staff member here at Vice was in a bar near the Jersey shore with his family when he was ten years old. It was a half-outside/half-inside beach bar kind of thing. Everybody was really drunk in the middle of the day, including a dwarf that was hanging around. Nobody knew him. So anyway, this Vice staff member (OK, it was me) had been getting a weird, leery eye from the dwarf all day. When I went to the bathroom, which was inside and far from the yard where everyone else was, the dwarf followed me in. He stood between the door and me and with the immortal line, "What do you think of this, kid?" he whipped out his dwarf dick. It looked like a big toe sitting in a bird's nest of pubes. We stood there like that for a good 30 seconds, him shaking his dick and me trying not to look at it. Finally, some other patron came in and the dwarf casually walked up to a urinal and started to piss. I really think I was almost molested by a dwarf that day. So yeah, the moral of the story is fuck dwarfs.

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"THE FUNNIEST @!% I HAVE SEEN IN YEARS AND YEARS" — TODD HANSON, *THE ONION*

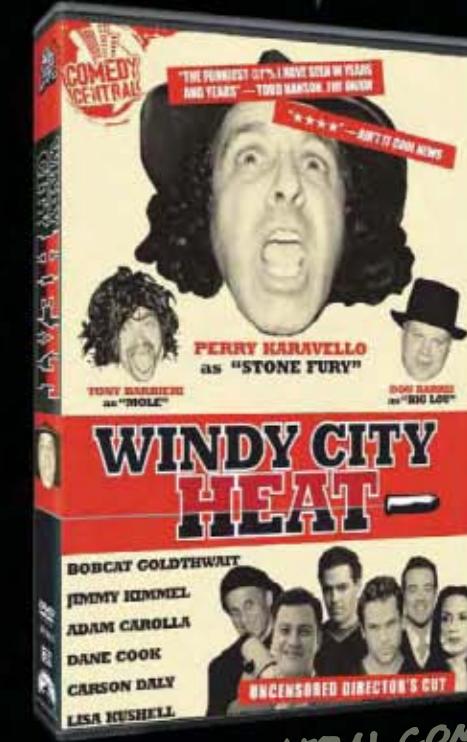
"QUITE SIMPLY THE GREATEST MOVIE OF ALL TIME" — *VICE MAGAZINE*

"★★★★" — *AIN'T IT COOL NEWS*

WINDY CITY HEAT

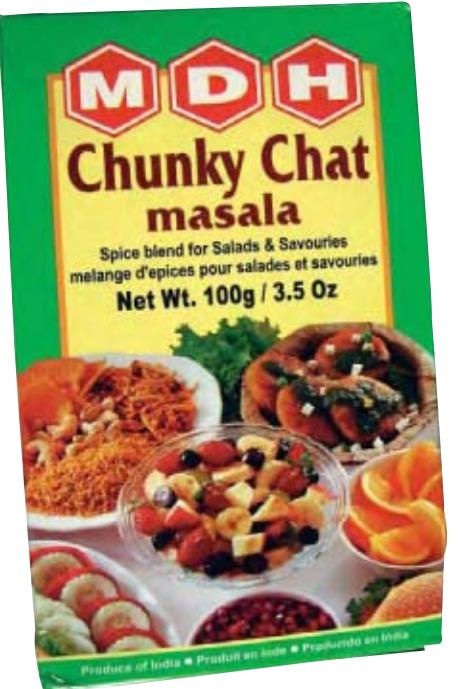
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CHUNKY CHAT

When you feel like there's no one else you can talk to and you're not really into getting a therapist, go get yourself a fat person and give them a "face full of verbal" as Steve Jones once said. Chubbies don't really get to talk to people that much and if you feed them enough they'll listen to your problems forever.



CLEAN 'N GENTLE BLOOD STAIN REMOVER

If you go back to a guy's house and you find this in his medicine cabinet make sure you get back into that bedroom as fast as you can and insist he make love to you. Murderers are hot.

Thanks Vicky from Queens



ASIAN AIR FRESHENER

Ever notice that you can't find deodorant in China? That's because they never get BO. You can be a big jealous baby about it or you can embrace their flawless body scent and let it fill up your car.



DUDU SOAP

We know you think your shit don't stink but you can't be sure until you clean it with dudu soap. It gets out those deep, brown shit stains that shit holds on to like its life depended on it.

Thanks Chris Colicott



FUNNY WAND

We found this while getting wasted in Central America recently and couldn't believe how perfect it is for riffing. It says "Funny" on it and makes sparkly sounds every time you point it at someone. It's so perfect for getting high it kind of makes you worried that the toy manufacturers down there are all potheads.



VIRGIN HAIR FERTILIZER

Ever notice how virgins are almost never bald? Well, scientists certainly did.



WHITEMAN TOOTHPASTE

After the horrible controversy surrounding Darkie Toothpaste, the company is finally swinging the pendulum the other way. White men aren't exactly renowned for having white teeth but, as Toby would say, EVS.



THUG CONDOMS

If you're going to do it with one of those extra-libidinous drug dealers from Bushwick make sure you get a pack of these. They're chocolate, extra-lubed, and twice as thick so he can still tear you a new asshole without giving you AIDS.

Thanks Andrew Walker of Glenburne, Ontario



BEACH BOX

No, this is not a joke.

Thanks Mario Brancaglioni of Göteborg, Sweden

FACE BED

Lust Project in Paris makes this bed set that looks like a face and it's great for making your neighbors feel shitty about all the lame Bed Bath & Beyond shit back at their place.

Email lust-project@noos.fr for more



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TIDBITS (A MONTHLY LOOK AT THE THINGS WE LOVE)



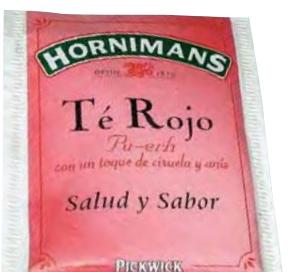
ASS BALLOONS

Have you ever met anyone that worked in an ER? Gays get the weirdest shit stuck up their asses: Coke bottles, light bulbs, vases... it costs the city millions of dollars in WTF!? fees every year. Luckily the Germans have started this huge campaign to try to get them to cram less harmful stuff up there, like balloons shaped like cum stains.



GAY POCKET SOLITAIRE

The only difference between this and straight pocket solitaire is you fantasize about other guys' bodies when you fondle yourself.



HORNIMANS TEA

There's nothing like settling down by yourself on a Friday night with some ice cream, a huge pile of pornos, and a fresh pot of horny man's tea. I wouldn't want to be your dick the next morning, but that night, in the heat of the wank, it's paradise.



FOUL FOOD

In an era where food companies are always bullshitting about the quality of their product it's nice to see someone finally admit that the shit they put in there is fucking disgusting.

This month's winner is Face Bed as it is the only real one we got. Coming next month: More things we actually like.

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Crude Humor
Language
Sexual Themes
Use of Alcohol and Tobacco
Violence



PlayStation®2



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THIS PAGE:
- ASIAN LESBIAN
FISTFIGHT ACTION
- THE END OF THE
WORLD



GANGS & CULTS



"Instead of punching, they slam into each other."



Photos by MK



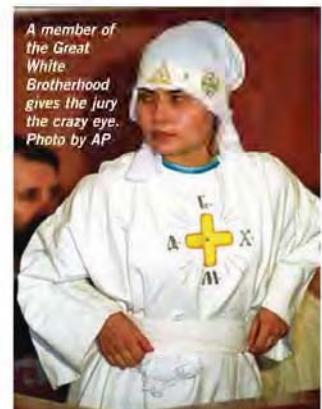
Teenage Chinese Dyke Gangs

 Chongqing is the fastest growing urban center in the world. According to the *Guardian*, its population increases by half a million people each year.

So is it any wonder that there are probably around a hundred lesbian gangs scattered around the city? There's got to be at least a little bit of everything there, right? For the most part these 16- to 18-year-old girls are not a threat to you. They don't hurt anyone but each other.

MK is a 21-year-old Chinese filmmaker who became fascinated with Chinese lesbo gangsters when he accidentally tried to pick one up in a bar in Chongqing, thinking she was a boy (he's a gay). That's when he discovered that ever since the country voted an androgynous girl as number one Super Girl in the Chinese version of *American Idol* (her official title was the Mongolian Cow Sour Yogurt Super Girl), looking like a lesbian has become the hottest thing in China since congee with pork and thousand-year-old egg.

But while it may be cute to watch two baby-faced girl-boys share ice cream cones on a street corner in their baggy little skater-boy clothes, if you ever see any rival dykes roll up and start squealing threats, back away and find a safe place to watch. You won't believe how these girls fight.



Hey Doomsday, When's The World Going To End?

 Great White Brotherhood: November 14, 1993 (whoops)

House of Yahweh: September 12, 2006 (but that's just when the end is supposed to start, you know?)

Brother Stair (Overcomer Ministries): Going on right now (God declared the day of reckoning March 6, 2001. Is your shit together?)

Pat Robertson (Christian Coalition): April 29, 2007 (fuck!)

The Lord's Witnesses: March 21, 2008 (noooooo!)

Philip Brown: April 6, 2008 (that's twice in one year)

Lori Toye (Ascended Masters): 2009 (at which point most of the world will have been gradually flooded anyway, so the end will be a mercy)

Worldwide Church of God: August 31, 2010 (too far away to worry about)

Solara (11:11 Doorway): December 31, 2011 (this is when the doorway off our planet closes for good)

Sword of God Brotherhood: 2017 (first year of the Dying Time)

Raelians: 2035 (return of the Elohim to Earth to claim their creation)

Sir Isaac Newton: 2060 (him we are inclined to believe, so don't make any plans past this year)

"I was hanging with my friend Kee-Kee in my office," says MK, "when a rival girl and two of her friends showed up for what they call a 'revenge beating.' They came in and started yelling at each other. I managed to defuse the situation, but just as the rival girl was leaving she gave Kee-Kee a look that was perhaps one second too long. That was the trigger. Kee-Kee grabbed one of the glass water bottles on the table and started hammering the girl in the face. Then the girl's two friends jumped Kee-Kee. They had a weird way of fighting. Instead of punching, they slammed into each other. Imagine trying to knock down a door. That's what they do. One girl got hold of an RCA cable and just started whipping Kee-Kee in random places. Another girl was body-slammimg her. After the table was half-flipped, she got ahold of a chair and hit her with it. I've never seen anything like it in my life."

RAF KATIGBAK

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"All the gays in the UK dress like hooligans. I think it's a 'dress as your oppressor' thing."
—Mike Skinner

Footie Clobber—Decades of Hooligan Fashion

 Gang violence has been a part of British football since the inception of the first league in the late 19th century. The idea of dressing up just to crack heads at matches, however, started in the 1960s. I should know. I was there as a member of West Ham United's Inter City Firm and I enjoyed it all immensely. Here's what I used to wear:
BOB MORRIS

Photos by Sanna Charles



1960s

It was all about mod. We bought the latest R&B records from the States and wore Italian suits. On the housing estates of East London the style toughened up and a new look of the "hard mods" developed. They were into wearing three-buttoned Tonik suits. "You couldn't go down the clock end with a velvet jacket and a shirt with ruffles could ya?" proclaimed Danny Speight in Terry Rawling's *Mod: A Very British Phenomenon*.

Tonik three-buttoned jacket
Merc trousers
Fred Perry shirt
N.D.C. boots

1970s

By the 70s, football fans had started to call themselves skinheads. The style of the early skin was very much based on the casual mod, but with army boots replacing desert boots. Levi's had to be 501s and worn high on the boot. Fred Perry had the top button done up and braces got thinner and thinner. My brother used knicker elastic the same color as his shirt but "it kept breaking and you had to take yards of it to school."

MA1 bomber jacket
Fred Perry polo shirt
Levi's 501 jeans
Dr. Martens high-leg boots

1980s

Around this time a new style was emerging: The "smoothie." They dressed like our Jamaican neighbors with Gabici jumpers, Farah slacks, and Adidas trainers or Italian slip-ons. This look very soon developed into the "casual," which is the longest-running and most prevalent style ever to grace these and many other shores. Although the Scousers and Mancs started to wear cagoules and jumpers tucked into their jeans, the classic casual look started in London and was then adopted elsewhere. At this time the top boys were my gang, the ICF.

CP Jacket
Aquascutum scarf
Armani jeans
Adidas shoes

1990s

Rave culture began to influence the terraces in the late 80s. The most endearing of all these looks was the "smart casual," where the emphasis was on having the most expensive and hard-to-find clothes possible. It was still all very mod to me.

Throughout the 90s, the clothes got pricier and more designer-based. One-upmanship meant people were going to matches in over £1,000 worth of clothes, wearing £500 CP Company jackets and £200 Stone Island cardigans.

Duffer yachting jacket
Stone Island hoody
Aquascutum polo shirt
Paul Smith jeans
Adidas shoes

2000s

This season on the terraces, there are a lot of yachting coats, Belstaff jackets, and Barbour coats. Kate Moss has just done a big campaign for Belstaff. In our own way, us football fans are doing our own little bit for the world of culture and fashion.

UNNATURAL ATTRACTION

CULT CLASSIC CINEMA ON TURNER CLASSIC MOVIES
LATE NIGHT FRIDAYS BEGINNING OCTOBER 13TH
HOSTED BY ROB ZOMBIE TCMUNDERGROUND.COM



THIS PAGE:

- SATAN
- BLOODS



"I'm just not trying to kill nobody."



A vest that was confiscated during the investigation of the murder. Courtesy of Stockholm police.

Scandinavian Satan

The Misanthropic Luciferian Order is the biggest satanic cult in Scandinavia. Last month it got its first martyr. Jon Nödtveidt, singer of the band Dissection, shot himself amidst whispers of murder plots within the group.

Eight years ago, Jon was convicted as an accomplice in an MLO-related murder. One of the founders of the group, Nemesis "Vlad" Khoshnood, was the main perp. During the murder investigations, police discovered guns and ammo in the ceiling of Jon's house along with a list of people the MLO were thinking of "assassinating." Once Vlad and Jon walked free from prison, a lot of MLO members and their hangers-on left the organization because they were opposed to the assassinating or, presumably, scared shitless for their own lives. Yet today, the previously closed group is advertising for new members because the old ones are too scared to be in it any more. These satanists are lonely.

During our investigation into this story, one of our Swedish writers was in a Stockholm record store when a stranger approached him and said: "Never mention MLO in a magazine. Not even in kind words. Or else."

This worried us, so we spoke to Inspector Lars Ohlin from the Norwegian police about the threat.

Vice: This threat is just bullshit right?

Lars Ohlin: When we arrested Nödtveidt and Khoshnood, they had acquired weapons. The soldiers were ready to march and there was a war chest of sorts.

So we should be worried?

Yes.

Shit.

SNORRE SMITH

Bloody Kool-Aid—Jim Jones Does It All

When we're dealing with gangs and cults, how could we omit Dipset's Jim Jones? Known for his Gainsbourg beard, motorcycle jackets, extra smedium shirts, and abundance of red bandanas, this self-proclaimed One-Eyed Willie went from being Cam's funny-looking hype-man to getting drafted by Lyor Cohen for an executive position at Warner Brothers, all the while having the hottest song in New York with "We Fly High."

Vice: Why the name?

Jim Jones: Life happens, man. They say everything happens for a reason and that was the nickname that my partner Cam'ron gave me when we first started in the industry. And it was relevant to what I was doing if you really look at it. They say Jim Jones is a cult leader, makes everybody drink Kool-Aid and has everybody follow him, and you know, Jim Jones, Byrd Gang leader, got Sizzurp, got music—so we got a little bit in common. I'm just not trying to kill nobody. I want everybody to have a good time.

You're a cult leader who also happens to be a gang member.

I've been affiliated with the Bloods since I was a teenager. And for y'all that's not familiar with the court of law, being a member of a gang is not a crime, you know what I mean? I came up in a Blood neighborhood and either you better act right or shit, you know what happens. I came up tough. I came to ball hard and there was nothing else for me to do so I started bangin' at a young age.

MACHO

Jim Jones' DVD A Day in the Fast Life is out now on Diplomats/Koch

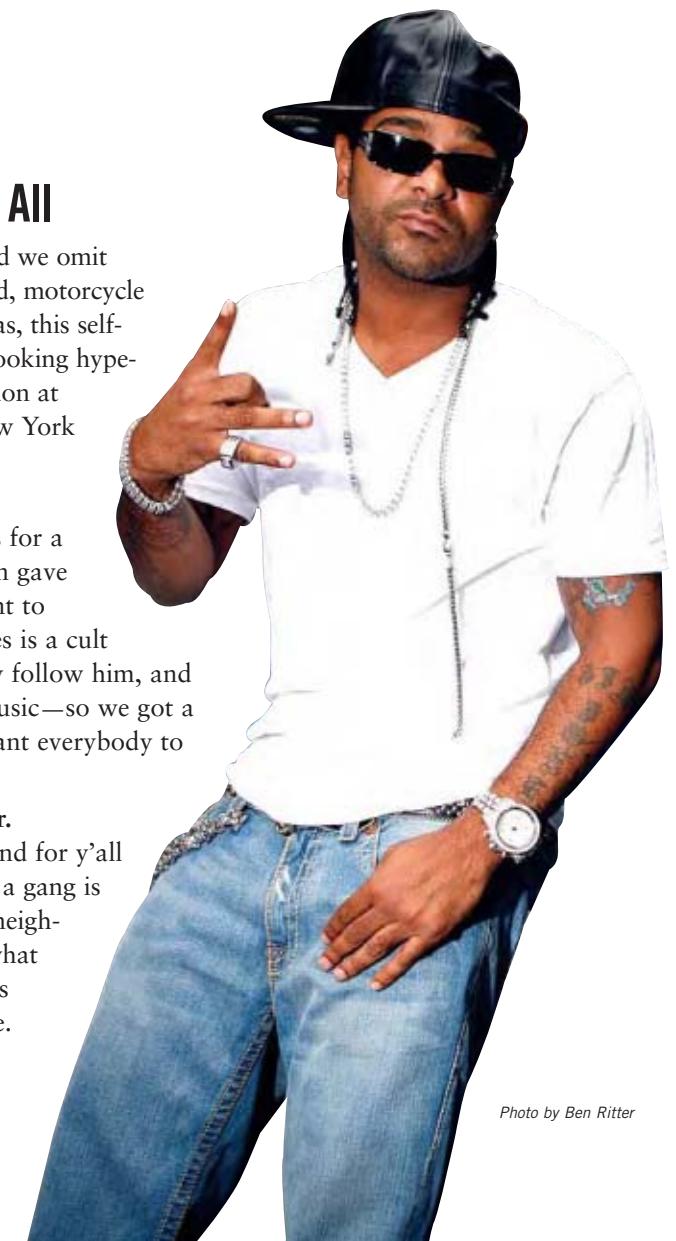


Photo by Ben Ritter

I REALLY SHOULD BE WATCHED

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Fellow Herschelwood Crips
Duke and Trap greet each other
with the Herschelwood/Houston H.
Photo by Peter Beste



HAND JIVE

How to Talk With Your Gang Hands

Setting aside for a moment the cred supremacy of inner-city housing projects—if the ghetto had a ghetto of its own, it would be Herschelwood. It is basically your favorite ghetto's favorite ghetto. Herschelwood's parent neighborhood is South Park, a primarily black post-WWII development on Houston's south side where the late DJ Screw, Fat Pat (RIP), H.A.W.K. (RIP), Lil Keke, K-Rino, Z-Ro, and the entirety of the South Park Coalition and the Screwed Up Click were spawned. It is the birthplace of Syrup (codeine cough syrup mixed with soda) and Screw's trademark chopped and screwed mixtapes. It is also one of the most dangerous areas in Houston.

"The kids here grow up watching us," says Duke, a Crip and member of the rap group Herschelwood Hardheadz, "Wondering why we're wearing blue clothes and whatever. It's a big influence. We just gotta guide them in

the right direction so they don't get mixed up in all of that. We got coaching to do."

The Crips run the neighborhood. Blue is not a prominent color—it is the only color. By this point the Crips' control has become a simple matter of reality rather than a nuisance or a threat, and the neighborhood accepts it as such. When we were there on a Saturday afternoon, two gunshots went off no more than a block away and no one fucking blinked.

"There's crime everywhere, bro," Duke says. "That right there's the ghetto. It's just like any neighborhood—ain't no telling when something's about to jump off."

"It's crazy out here," says Trap, a 24-year-old Herschelwood denizen who sports a trickle of ice-pick puncture wounds along his right ribcage. "Everybody trying to eat and survive. People don't wanna be around here, man—real talk. We shed blood out here. Before Lil Keke, back before rap even came

around this motherfucker, we be doin' some gorilla-type shit."

"A real nigga is a lower-type dude that's gonna stick in your corner and never turn his back on you," he tells us. "That's what's real. A real nigga's gonna be there through thick and thin. There's some hood love out here. This here is a jungle—I know I'm gonna need other people's help, and other hoods' help when I drop. A lot of gorillas running around, straight silverback. I'm telling you, if I ain't locking them up, they doin' something. But we're running the race—real talk. We done got rid of all the roaches, everything sprayed. I done killed this block off. It's a blessing. Lord gave me a sign, and I ain't get too many signs cause it's hardball. I'm gonna play my cards right and I ain't gonna give up. I'm gonna make it up out this motherfucker."

LANCE SCOTT WALKER

CONTINUED ON PG. 46

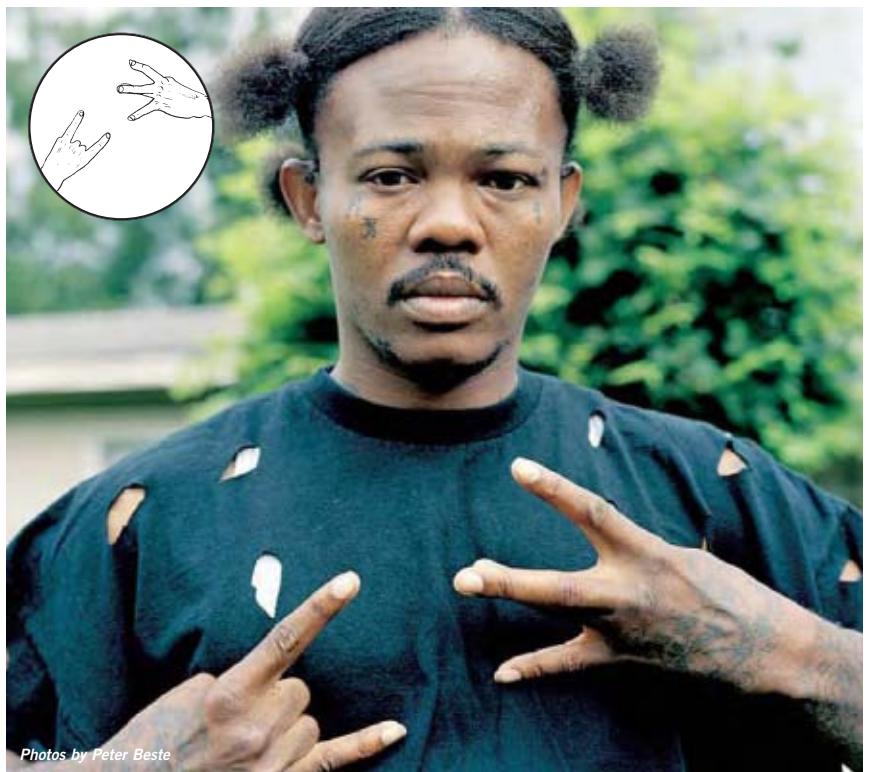


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THROWIN' UP IN HERSCHELWOOD: A PRIMER TO HANDSIGNS



Photos by Peter Beste

Our buddy Duke shows us how to make the Herschelwood H and W. Keep in mind these are for other folks to read, so they should be backward to you.



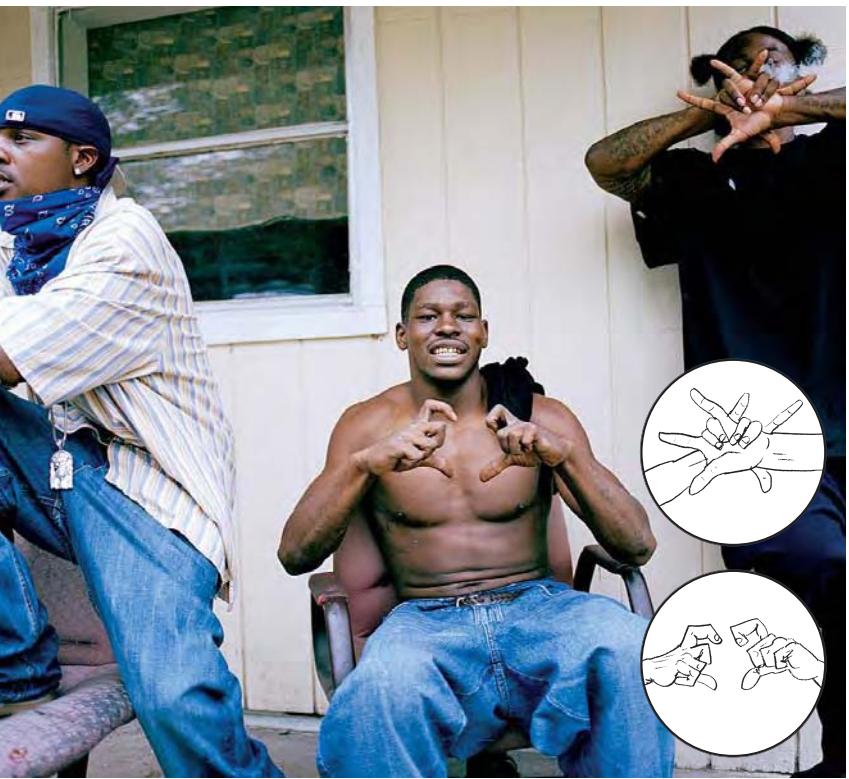
Here Duke and his pal Knock do two variations of the Crip Cs. How you throw your C can say a lot about your personality. See how Duke's are all rigid and compact while Knock's fan out like the wings of a soaring eagle?



If you've got a drink or gat in one hand or just have a really good lean going you can just throw W for "the Wood." Folks will know what you're saying.



Same as above, but Duke is using the H as a pointer to emphasize the W. The H can also stand for Houston if you're signing at an out-of-towner.



This knuckly little number is a double BK for "Blood Killa."

Trap shows us his Cs while Duke shows us an advanced Herschelwood sign in which a crossed double H forms the W.



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PHOTO: MIKE PISCITELLI

WACO SHAKEDOWN

A New Davidian Prophet Splits the Branch

Thirteen years after it went up in an apocalyptic blaze, the site where the Branch Davidians' Waco compound sat—and where a new Mt. Carmel Church was built in 1999 with help from famed radio nutbar Alex Jones—remains at the center of a bizarre conflict involving land-ownership rights, a spiritual coup, and a patch of "heathen" trees.

A new cult of personality is emerging in Waco under a man of God named Charlie Pace, a longtime Davidian, though never a follower of David Koresh. He's referred to David as the Antichrist, a false idol, and other mean things. Calling themselves the Branch, Lord Our Righteous, and boasting a dozen or so followers, the Pace devotees have taken over Mt. Carmel to put things right.

This latest Branch's main problem lies with some actual trees—a group of 76 crape myrtles that were planted 11 years ago in honor of the Davidians who died during the ATF siege. Pace contends they are thinly veiled idols that were being "worshipped" by Koresh's surviving disciples, a scattered few of whom remain in the region.

"That whole grove of trees was planted and had nameplates at the bottom of each tree, with the names of the people who died," Pace rails. "God is against groves because

that is where heathens traditionally gathered to worship. We're talking about a grove that doesn't even bear fruit and is specifically intended to idolize those who died here!"

Former Koresh follower Clive Doyle, who survived the raid in '93 and for the past few years had tended the land as the main sect's de facto leader, recalls Pace's pronouncements well: "Charlie had started living on the land again, because anybody who is of the church can, and he went around the trees putting a 'curse' on them, saying God was going to destroy them all."

When God didn't, Pace decided to amend his prophecy and take action: "The Lord told me, 'If you want to break the curse of Koresh on that property and let the world know that you worship the Lord and not a man, get rid of those trees—especially that one tree. The one that's supposed to be for David.' I said that we were going to have a symbolic burning of the tree, and that Koresh's legacy—the curse—would then be removed."

And so it came to pass on this last April 19, when Koresh followers have traditionally held a service to commemorate the anniversary of the fire, that Pace took the pulpit and described his plan to his disciples. Pace had shattered the graven stone plaque bearing Koresh's name and chopped down the former

leader's tree. He then laid the myrtle's remains out to dry, pointing its four main branches toward the four points of the compass, and began to set them ablaze.

But an avenging angel swooped in and Pace wasn't able to finish the arbor exorcism. Bonnie Haldeman, mother of David Koresh himself, who'd come to attend the memorial as usual, nabbed the remains of David's tree and threw them in the back of her husband's pickup. "When Charlie cut down David's tree," Bonnie told us, "I shoved it off at first. There's a lot of things in my life that I've got to worry about besides a tree. But then, when I found out he was going to burn it, that upset me."

"I don't like to hold grudges, but I hate that Charlie talks about David like he does. He says David was the serpent—I guess because David made that tape in the 80s called 'The Serpent's Root.' But he was never around during the years that David was there receiving his teachings. The people that knew David saw who he really was. We had a special, special teaching from a very special person. I may not agree with everything he did, but he was my son. Even the mother of Jesus had a hard time with her son at times. David was one of God's children, and I have to believe that I'll see him again."

SHERMAKAYE BASS



DVS
LOG ONTO: DVSSHES.COM

ISRAEL-LITES

I Expected Rage and I Got Nerds

Do you know about the Black Israelites? They are a cult of black people who dress like biker-gang wizards and hold public “we hate white people” rallies in front of Macy’s. We spent about two weeks coaxing three Black Israelites out of the internet and into a Burger King in Harlem to tell us what their deal is. Senior Editor Amie Barrodale set it up, and she’s white, so once she was in deep enough to get a sit-down, she had to get a black writer in there by saying, “He’s my husband.” This is because Amie was supposed to be just a lady who was interested in the Black Israelites. Not a writer who wanted to riff.

So it was that our friend, writer, TV Carnage inventor, Truth antismoking-campaign star, and black guy Derrick Beckles went to Burger King on a Friday night to meet with three maniacs about signing up. We needed pics to prove it happened, so we had a photographer dress like a tourist and shoot them “as though he was just into their costumes.” Here is Derrick’s story...

I was late for the meeting, so when I walked in and didn’t see three black *Mad Max* gladiators, I thought they’d left. I was disappointed, but a tiny bit relieved. As I was walking out, I saw this inconspicuous table: A nerd in a tie, a woman with salon dreads, and an elderly woman in cubicle casual. They were all giving me significant eye contact, and then the older lady whispered, “Derrick.” I whispered back, “Yes.”

I went and ordered some food. Then I sat down with them and said, “I want to be straight with you guys: My mom’s white and my dad’s black.”

They just sat there. It was weird. The younger woman, Kim*, asked me about “my wife.”

“Is Amie still in Mexico?”

“Yuh-yeah. She’s not baaaah-aaack yet. Crazy. Um, she’s so busy.”

“Yeah, it sounds like she is.”

I had forgotten about the photographer at this point, so when I looked up and saw this Asian guy taking a picture of me I said, “What the fuck is that guy doing?”

Toni, the older lady, was like, “He can’t do that! What’s he doing, taking pictures of us? He can’t do that.”

And Kim goes, “You know it’s such a

shame. These people and their stereotypes, it’s just sad that he’s living out these stereotypes.”

We had some more chitchat and then they asked why I wanted to be a Black Israelite.

I said, “Amie and I were just, you know, surfing the internet one night and we...”

I had to change tracks here, because I was about to crack myself up. I had this picture in my mind of a couple surfing the internet together, holding hands, going, “Oh, Black Israelites. Let’s look into that, honey. Maybe we need some of that.”

So, I said, “I just need to change the course of my life, take things more seriously. I’ve been partying a lot, you know...”

“Mmmmmmmmm-hmm. Ex-actly.”

I still had not heard word one about the white devils. I was basically sitting with three Seinfelds like, “Who are these people? They are so nerdy and out of their minds.” The one dude in the tie, I could not imagine him dressed in a wizard hat cursing out a grandmother at

Union Square. He was so soft-spoken, saying “Oh, that’s great” to everything I said.

And then, finally, it happened. He quietly slid a manila envelope across the table and I was like, “OK, here we go. This is it.”

I opened the envelope and it held this thing that looked like a pizza menu with nice little pictures of people who looked like deliverymen. The text explained, in a calm and even manner, that black people were the original Israelites. It even trotted out that old chestnut, “You could be black, white, purple, green, yellow, orange—we don’t care! We invite all people to blah blah blah.”

I was like, “Jesus Christ, these are SO not the right people.”

As if on cue, Kim said, “You know, it’s unfortunate, because a lot of people think we’re the Hebrew Israelites. You know, the ones that stand on street corners screaming at people. They’ve even screamed at us. I tried to talk to them once. They called me a tool of the white man.”

Toni said, “You can’t reason with people like that.”

Drowning in nerd vibes and kindness and getting shot by an “undercover” photographer, I ate my last fry and went home.

DERRICK BECKLES

* Names have been changed.

You could be black, white, purple, green, yellow, orange – we don’t care! We invite all people to blah blah blah blah blah blah



Photo by Kris Yenbamroong

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FALUN GONG AND ME

Xinxing in the Park

Chinatown: New York's Seward Park is a riot of incredibly fit senior citizens by 6 AM every day. Near the north end of the park, a tai chi group of about 40 members practices to a stereo blasting pentatonic music. Some of them are especially limber, and their exaggerated lunges bring their crotches near the ground. At the jungle gym in the park's center, old Chinese women hang from the monkey bars. Old Chinese men walk backward in circles. Another group self-flagellates—Chinese people believe that smacking yourself increases circulation. Two guys do high kicks. You have to wonder if any of these grandmas and grandpas ever just lie down in the middle of the park and expire from exertion.

Then you have the Falun Gong people. The Chinese government persecutes them as a brainwashing cult, but FG members say that they're just following a program of meditation, exercise, and spiritual enlightenment. Their leader, Li Hongzhi, claims to be divine. He also doesn't like gays. Oh, and he knows how to teleport himself.

One of the Chinatown Falun Gong regulars is an old granny who contradicts herself by answering yes to every question, whether it's posed in English, Cantonese, or Mandarin. Either she speaks an obscure dialect or she's deaf. Seeing as it seems she's unable to pull her blue nylon stockings over her swollen ankles when dressing (they're

bunched down on top of her Keds) you'd think she might be frail. Yet this woman, only slightly taller than Yoda, holds her hands over her head for the specified total of 14 minutes, while newcomers drop their arms after four, experiencing a unique mixture of numbness and searing pain. Trust me, I know. I've been doing the exercises with them this week to see what it's like.

By the third or fourth day, however, the routine feels less painful. Most members talk about the immediate "benefits" of practice. Fatimah says her back pain has disappeared. Wen-Shu no longer gets headaches. She also speaks of "special abilities" she's acquired since practicing, though at first, she's reluctant to elaborate: "That's not our purpose," she says. "I don't want people to feel like showing off and going to join Falun Gong."

Fatimah echoes her sentiments. "You know, we try to be just like ordinary people." A few days later, I attend a Falun Gong march across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall, in support of millions of Chinese practitioners who recently withdrew from the Chinese Communist Party. Like other Falun Gong events around the world, this march was organized by "word of mouth." They don't have a website calendar or a mass mailing list. Beyond the spiritual figurehead of Li Hongzhi, they have no central leadership. This brand of stealthy organizing, many allege, is what alarmed the Chinese

government into banning the practice in 1999. That April, with absolutely no warning, about 10,000 Falun Gong members materialized in front of the central government's buildings to protest, then dispersed. Several months later, Jiang Zemin outlawed Falun Gong.

"Zemin," says Wen-Shu, "he's just too afraid he will lose his power because so many people want to be Falun Gong—even more people than in the Communist Party. One day people and the Chinese government will realize that Falun Gong is really good. It's good for the mind and the physical body."

And what about her special abilities?

"I don't tell people. For one reason, they don't believe."

After some begging on my part, she finally discloses her new talents.

"I'm more sensitive," she says. "If I'm thinking about someone, then they often say, 'Hey, I was just going to call you.' Or immediately she will call me." According to Wen-Shu, this has happened many times since she began Falun Gong.

"But that's not Falun Gong's purpose," she says. "We develop the *xinxing*, the mind." Then, while I massage my aching shoulder muscles, Wen-Shu says, "There are three words we have to practice. Truth. Compassion. Tolerance. Then our mind and body will go back to the more pure state."

T.D. CHAN



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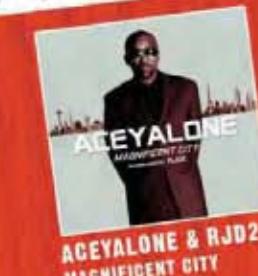
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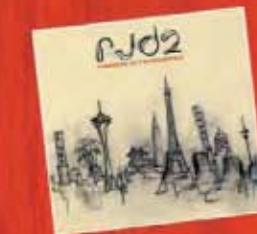
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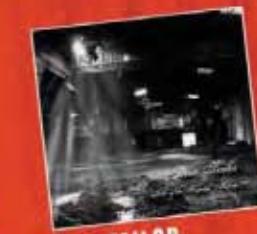
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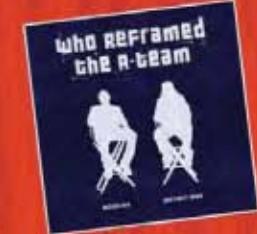
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A-TEAM
WHO REFRAMED THE A-TEAM

I Joined Three Cults Simultaneously

ADIDAM



Their whole deal is worshiping a guru from Long Island who now lives on Fiji and looks like a cross between Yoda and a man-frog.

Vice made me join three cults for this issue: Adidam, the Moonies, and Aleph. Since Adidam tops the list of “controversial groups” at cult watchdog Rick Ross’s website, I figured it’d be the best place to start. Also, their whole deal is worshiping a guru from Long Island who now lives on Fiji and looks like a cross between Yoda and a man-frog. This, cultwise, is about as good a vibe as it gets.

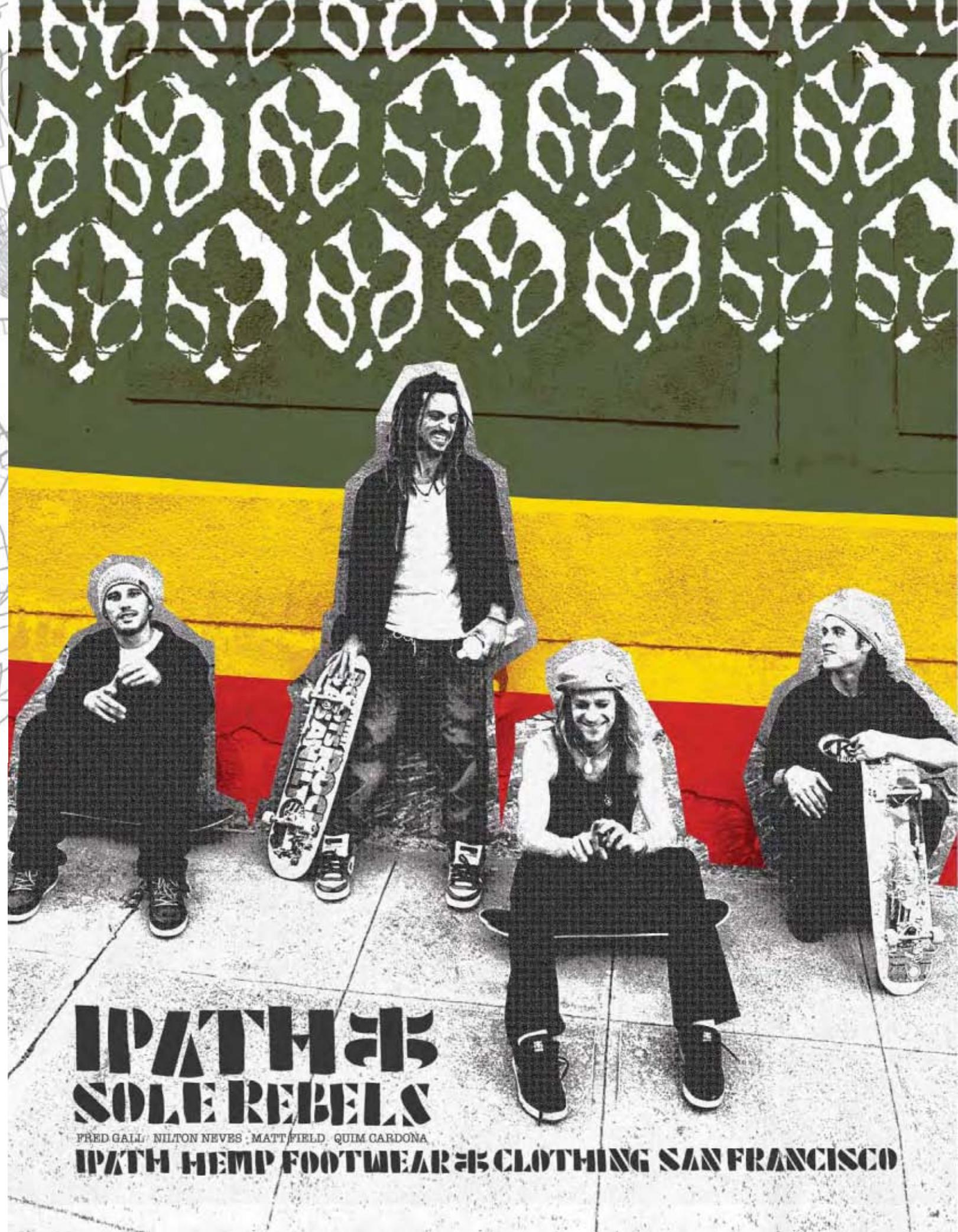
I called their New York number and got a chipper-sounding guy named Gene who told me there was an introductory study group at an apartment on the Upper West Side the next night, to which I said, “Cool, thanks.” He then told me, “You know, it’s really amazing once you begin devoting your daily attention to the guru and enter into that heartspace, how it cuts through all the everyday crap of the world and moves you closer and closer to the state of god-union. It’s almost like an alchemical process.” I said, “Cool, thanks.”

The apartment was owned by an old gay couple who looked like an engorged George

him due to his stance on yoga, Adi Da’s spirit came into his room and forced him to wear it like skin, which led to some later freak-out on a train. I zoned out for a lot of this, but the gist was that his consciousness now resides about a foot above and slightly behind the head of his physical body, kind of like in GTA.

The night’s main event was a 40-minute video comp of “Beloved’s” lectures from the 80s. Every few seconds, Teddy, the Lucas-looking gay, cut the tape to share an anecdote of his time with Beloved or explain the nuances of his behavior. For instance, when he paused at length between sentences and darted his eyes back and forth? That was him dissolving the karma of every being who ever lived. And when he kept locking eyes with different people in the audience? Drawing power from their devotion so that he could retransmit it through his gaze, of course.

I was worried there’d be some sort of intensive discussion once it was over, but everybody just got up and wandered into the kitchen for some iced tea and crackers. I bought a tape called *When the Tiger Disappears*, featuring a





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naked Beloved on the cover, from the bookselling table. Ciggy assured me it was a choice cut. Henry, the guy in charge of the table, gave me a little Xeroxed schedule and said I should come to a "Celebration of Good Company" at the cult's group house out in Brooklyn the next weekend. "There'll be chanting and testimonials," he told me enticingly.

That Saturday I got to the house a little ahead of schedule and plopped down on the couch with a copy of Adi Da's autobiography, *The Knee of Listening*. I was just getting into how his dog dying first led him to realize his own divinity, when an older woman in a makeshift sari sat down next to me and asked what I could donate for the meeting. I put in \$15 over her insistence that I didn't have to pay the full fee since I was a student, and she cut me a deal on my own copy of *Knee* from the book table.

While we were haggling, a similarly robed mommish-looking lady draped a purple cloth over a TV tray in front of me, then set up a little mini shrine with a portrait of Beloved, a scented candle, and some big orange flowers. After everything was in order, she bowed to the picture and started stepping back and forth with both hands raised, mumbling something non-English-sounding. After the first few paces, the registrar woman fell into almost-sync next to her.

Eventually a few of the folks from the apartment showed up (though sadly not the crazies) along with a young, dumpy-looking Asian girl and a woodchuckesque former hippie, and things got under way.

The house leader, a trim, 40-year-old black guy named Dale who had one dangly turquoise earring and a smooth, open-collared suit, came forward and explained the chant he'd written to start things off.

"You probably don't know any of these words, but that's OK," he told us, "They are full of great meaning which your heart will understand even if you don't. Also, I forgot to make copies this morning, so if you could just pass it around that way everybody can see it."

He then walked back to a keyboard set up behind all the seats, set the rhythm to samba, and began leading us through a melody that sounded like dialing a long-distance number, but more drawn out and with the words "Adi Da" every couple of syllables.

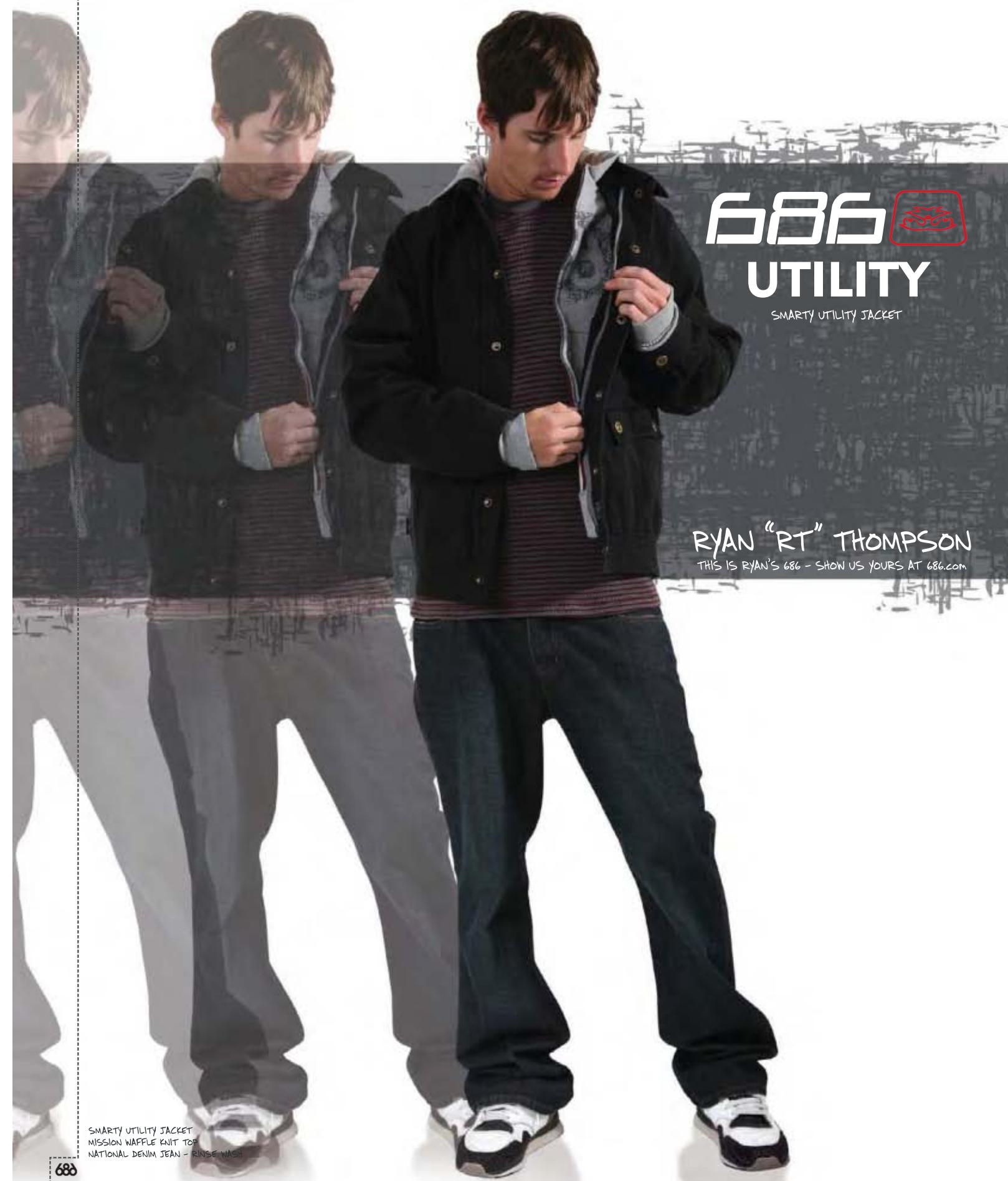
Somewhere around repetition 50, he cut us off, let the drums go for another measure, then came back into the living room to talk for an hour about his recent trip to Fiji to worship Adi Da, which I tried as hard as humanly possible to stay awake through.

After he finished, a younger gal came forward to talk about her recent stay on Fiji, and it was lights out for real. When I came to they were putting on a 15-minute video to wrap things up. Rather than lectures, this video consisted of a three-minute shot of Beloved mounting a stage in front of a crowd of devotees followed by a fucking 12-minute close-up of his unmoving face, which everybody around me stared at like it was a magic-eye poster.

The next study group was back at the apartment that Thursday. I got there about 20 minutes after it was supposed to start and went through the open door to find the living room completely empty. Expecting to stumble in on some frenetic orgy of middle-aged saddies, I made my way down the hallway to the bedroom, but there found only housemates George and Teddy checking their email at separate computers.

"Well, you're the only one here," George told me. We walked back into the living room and watched yet another video of Adi Da, this one featuring a Q&A with some of his astonishingly stupid followers from the late 70s (one woman in one of those Kate Bush sack dresses asked "What do you think of infinity?"). I was really expecting some sort of chat about the purposiveness of life or whatever *this* time when it was over, but Teddy just mumbled "Pretty good tape," and headed back to his room with Bob.

Right as I was about to leave, Bob called me back to his desk and said, "I've been trying to e-mail you about our upcoming retreat but keep getting bounced. Can you take a look and see if this address is right?" For some reason he had inserted the numeral 6 right in the middle of my name. Adidam is the worst cult I've ever been in.



I Joined Three Cults Simultaneously

THE MOONIES



On the night after my first Adidam meeting, I swung over to the New York HQ of Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church on 43rd St. Inside its storefront, there were a few people at tables and some general Asian music playing on a boom box. A smiley girl named Dana introduced herself, then told me I should come to service on Sunday to learn more about Mooniedom and gave me her number. I put my info on a little sign-in sheet and was free to go.

The next Sunday I ditched out on sleep to go to Moonie church. For all the supposed fiscal might of the UWC, their chapel looked a lot like a grade school gym, except with a big, wooden mandala-looking emblem surrounded by purple curtains where the scoreboard would be and a sharply-dressed Jamaican guy named Rev. Delton preaching at the free-throw line. The congregation was a weird mix of old black women, teenage Koreans, dumpy middle-aged white guys with Asian wives, and two white junkies covered with tattoos who got up in the middle of the sermon—needles in hand—to go shoot up in the bathroom.

Their whole deal is that Rev. Moon was visited by the spirit of Jesus when he was 16 and told he could be the second coming by getting everybody to have a bunch of kids and be faithful to their wives.

Apparently the Rev. Moon and his associates are really big on “unifying cultural divisions through marriage,” and like to express this sentiment by pointing out mixed-race couples whenever they have the chance. After crowing about one Guyanese woman’s willingness to marry a Trinidadian, Delton asked a lone white guy with a graying bowl cut and absent Japanese wife to stand up and be recognized for his contribution to global unity. “He is white and he married a Japanese! We all talk about it, but this guy actually did it!”

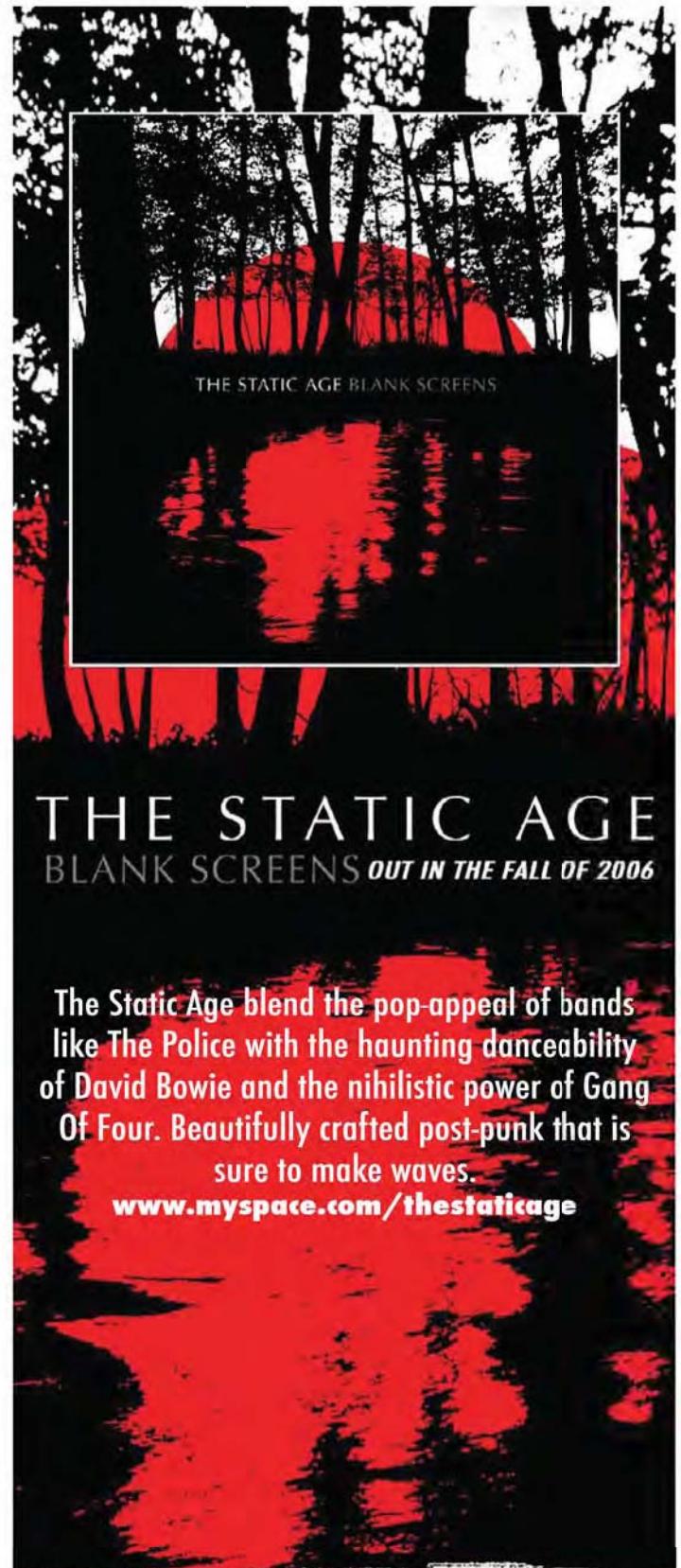
After the sermon, Rev. Delton invited one of the other ministers up to the stage to perform a spirited, vaguely homoerotic duet of the Carpenters’ “Top of the World” while everybody lined up in front of the altar to give their offerings.

I was starting to get nervous about things wrapping up quickly, but luckily this was it. Dana snagged me on my way out and introduced me to a short, stocky Korean guy named Rev. Hyun who told me to come back later in the week so he could help me through some of the basic tenets and terminology of the movement.

When I popped in on the Moonies the next day, a short black man I’d never met before looked up at me from his table and said, “Hi, Thomas.” Before I could get wigged out, Dana came over from the back to smile and have me sign in again, then grabbed Rev. Hyun and a plate of cookies and we all sat down to have a little chat about Unification.

Basically their whole deal is that Rev. Moon was visited by the spirit of Jesus when he was 16 and told he could be the second coming by getting everybody to have a





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bunch of kids and be faithful to their wives. This would fulfill Christ's original mission of founding God's family on earth, which got fucked up by his crucifixion. Right after he told me this, Rev. Hyun kind of shifted his glance and made this exaggerated Wha?!? face, going, "Are you telling me Jesus was supposed to get married?! Ohhh kayye." I wanted to tell him that this wasn't such a hard sell compared with worshiping a 60-year-old guido, but settled on just mentioning something about the *Da Vinci Code*.

Rev. Hyun moved on to talking about the Unification's biggest enemies: Freud, Alfred Kinsey, and Hugh Hefner, the forefathers of the "Free Sex" movement.

"Rev. Moon's alternative to this is 'Absolute Sex,'" he told me. "That's where the husband's genitals belong to his wife and vice versa. Black preachers always crack up when they hear him talk about this, because they know it's true."

The Moonies were already off to a pretty good lead with the cookies and vaguely plausible theology and genital ownership policy. As if to seal the deal, when I asked him how much it would cost to sign up for the introductory lectures, Rev. Hyun went, "Psssshht, I'll do it for free."

For the rest of the week I devoted myself wholly to the UWC. No bulbous gurus, no unresponsive Japanese supervillains, just me and the Rev and some slickly illustrated PowerPoint presentations each afternoon, going over how the four-unit foundation of love provided a stable bridge between the perfection stage of human development and the achievement of the three divine blessings. It got a little convoluted and technical at times but all in all, everything made pretty sound sense when I could understand it, even the part about Eve fucking Satan (which Hyun paved the way for with another "Here comes some zany shit..." face).

By the end of the third lecture I was basically sold. I started to find myself thinking that sex was sort of bullshit, and looking through crap on the Unification website at night instead of browsing for porn. Did you know the Moonies want to build a bridge-and-tunnel network connecting Alaska and Russia across the Bering Strait called the "World Peace King Tunnel"? Maybe it's just the indoctrination speaking, but doesn't that seem like a really, really good idea?

About the only thing I was balking at was being matched up with a stranger to be mass-married, but from what I'd seen around the building, odds were pretty good the girl they'd hook me up with would be something of a looker or at least Asian.

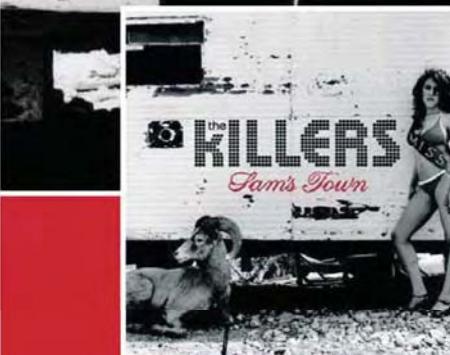
When Rev. Hyun read to me from his email that True Father Moon was going to be in New York the next weekend, you could have heard my gasp down the hall. Then he reread the message and realized it was just going to be his wife. Crud.

Nevertheless, after Sunday service, the Reverend and I cruised over to the Hammerstein Ballroom, which it turns out is fully Moonie-owned and -operated. It's hard to explain an auditorium full of grown men and women psyched to the point of screaming about an old Korean woman in a business suit slowly taking the stage then plodding through a speech with all the personality and enthusiasm of someone reading from the phone book, but when you're there with them, doing creamer shots of grape juice in the Holy Wine Ceremony and reading along in English about the fucking Peace Tunnel, it's pretty hard not to scream a little yourself.

I'm not going back to the Moonies and I know this was just supposed to be a cult evaluation, but to be totally honest, I have a hard time not answering the phone when they call me. The Moonies is hands down the best cult I've ever been in.

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I Joined Three Cults Simultaneously

ALEPH



The morning after my introduction to Adi Da, I cruised on over to the English website of Aleph to see about signing up for some yoga classes.

Aleph is the perky, Judaic moniker picked out by Fumihiro Joyu to distance his sect from its previous incarnation, Aum Supreme Truth, and their assorted legal slipups in the mid-90s (creating an arsenal of chemical and biological weaponry, murdering critics and former cult members, and attempting to overthrow the Japanese government by means of coordinated sarin attacks on the Tokyo subway being among the most major of their oopsies). While squinty beardo Shoko Asahara is still guru in many longtime members' hearts, as of 2003 his particular brand of LSD- and mayhem-fueled apocalypticism has been junked in favor of a bubblier and far less deathly doctrine, emphasizing the karmic benefits of daily meditation and giving people presents. They even adopted a cute widdle dove as their new emblem. Between the cartoonish nowadays good vibes and the corpse-ridden legacy of destruction, who in their

For my first foray into meditation I decided to bypass the beginner's option recommended by the Aleph website, "This Body Is Impure" (a little obvious, right?), and pour myself straight into "The Suffering When Senses Become Weak."

right mind wouldn't want to join up?

There used to be a branch based out of New York, but after September 11, the U.S. State Department decided to declare them a terrorist organization and freeze all their assets, just in case. I figured even if they didn't have an official clubhouse or anything, there still had to be a few old Aumites/Alephians kicking around who'd be willing to show a new initiate the ropes, so I shot an email say-

ing as much to the head of their PR department and put on my waiting cap.

After a few days of impatient silence, I decided to refresh PR's memory of my interest in learning about the Dharma, and after a few more days of near-unbearable anticipation (imagine really having to pee, but the spiritual equivalent), I broke down and emailed every address I could find on the site or plausibly invent. One of them had to be up for having me aboard, even if it was only the distant, insular Shikoku branch (I wasn't about to be picky).

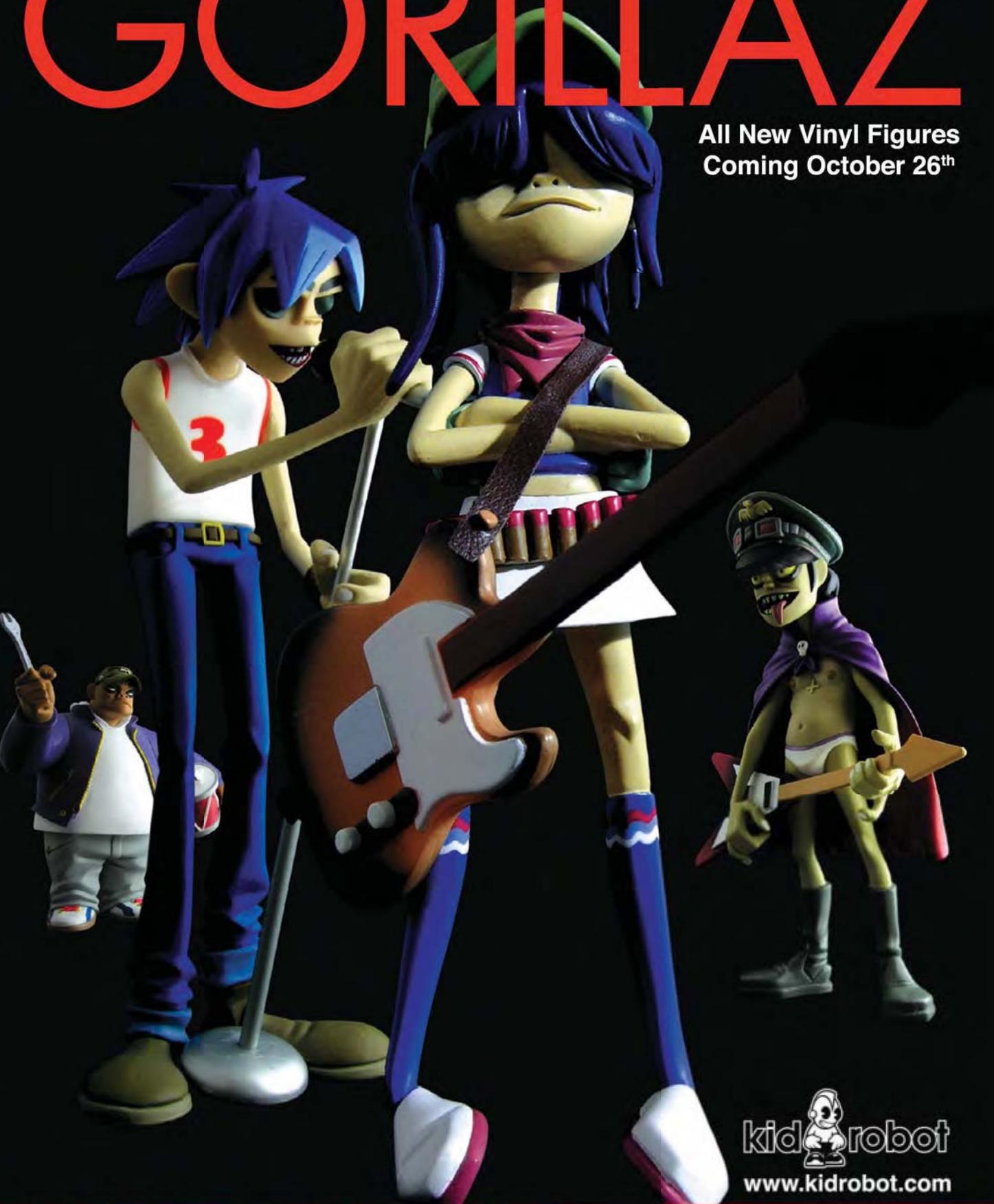
Over the next week, I occupied myself with my other cults and tried to put visions of toiling sleeplessly at the cult's scenic Mt. Fuji compound out of my head—they had to get back to me at some point, if only as a matter of proper netiquette. This is Japan after all.

In the meantime, however, I figured it'd be a good idea to practice what few monkly rites I knew of, so that when Aleph finally came a-callin' I could just dive right in. I pushed the couch and the TV to opposite

CONTINUED ON PG. 130

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CULT OF RUNNING

Sri Chinmoy Knows Shoes



Most runners have one brand and make of shoe they've been buying for the past 20 years. They get locked in and never try anything different. But we had a hunch that if they were to test-drive a new-fangled shoe, they'd prefer it.

That's why we sent some of the latest models to our buddies who study with Sri Chinmoy.

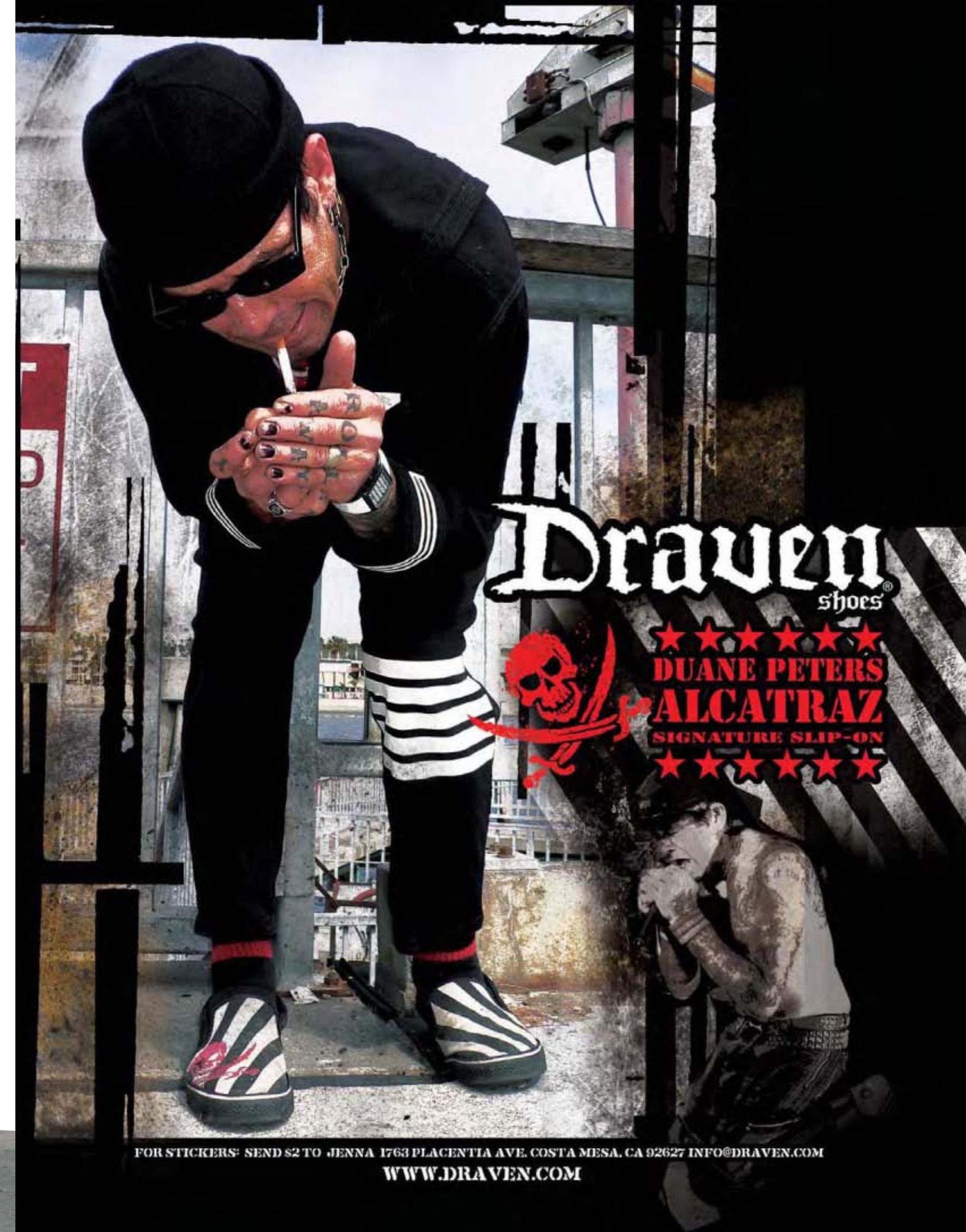
Who's that, you ask? Well, Sri Chinmoy is a Queens-based spiritual guide who encourages a balanced lifestyle. That means that the people who follow him pray and meditate a lot and eat really healthy. Sri Chinmoy also hosts spiritual running events that range from two-milers to "ultramarathons" like the 3,100-miler (60 miles a day, every day, for six weeks). In our estimation, Sri Chinmoy ain't half bad.

So we sent some of the newest shoes from Asics, Adidas, Fila, and Puma to our friends who run to attain spiritual enlightenment. They used the shoes for a week and then met up with us at the Perfection in the Head World barbershop, which is run by Chinmoy. It's out in Queens in a strip of Chinmoy-owned businesses, all of which are painted sky blue.

We expected that Abichal, Dipali, Dusan, Medur, Sundar, Sahishnu, Sakshama, and Utpal would hardly have a negative word to say about the shoes, or about anything at all for that matter, but they were surprisingly discerning and on-point. Maybe there really is something to this running-till-you-puke thing.



Photos by Ben Mistak



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**ADIDAS CLIMACOOL KONA**

Dipali: The Adidas is a lightweight shoe with good cushioning. I would feel confident wearing it in a multiday race, such as the 1,000-miler.

Sundar: I've only run ten marathons and a couple of the 47-mile races, but my general experience with weird little closing systems is that for me, because of my high instep, they don't work.

Sakshama: I really like these shoes. They're great. They have stability. They keep me running properly. I rank them all 5s in durability, comfort, support, and appearance.

**ASICS GEL KAYANO XII**

Sundar: I'm kind wary of Asics because all Asics shoes have this anti-pronation device in them. They say it helps pronators and doesn't hurt non-pronators. That doesn't seem quite logical to me. But I liked the shoe. I liked the wide forefoot. It's called slip last, where the forefoot is wide and the heel is narrow. [Pronation is when your arch hits the ground when you put your foot down. In the long term, it fucks you up—Ed.]

Dusan: The Asics is fantastic. I love the Asics shoes.

Utpal: These shoes have lots and lots of cushioning. But as someone with pronation issues, this is not a long-term option for me. For short-distance running, it might work.

**PUMA COMPLETE PHASIS III**

Medur: I liked it. The flexibility and the softness of the sole felt good. But the upper part was too snug, particularly along the ankle. That kind of thing can develop over the course of a couple days and cause real problems. If I were to keep this shoe, I'd probably cut open the toe box with scissors and remove the heel support entirely.

Sahishnu: For running, they were perfect because they had just the right amount of flexibility and pretty good cushioning. If I were a hard mileage runner I'd be a little more critical. But then, if I were a hard mileage runner, I wouldn't be so fat. I'd automatically be 30 pounds lighter.

Sakshama: I'm overweight, so these are not right for me on the pavement. But on the track they are excellent. I quite liked them as a track shoe.

**FILA FLOW VELOCE**

Dipali: It looks very nice, but by the time I finished two miles, my left arch was telling me that this shoe was not going to work for me. Flat-footed people like me need arch support. After only eight miles, I had quite a sharp pain.

Utpal: This was a complete surprise. I know some of my friends have had problems with them, but I've got to say, I think I've found something that works for me. They seem to have a lightness, something that gives a little more control. I think I found my shoe.

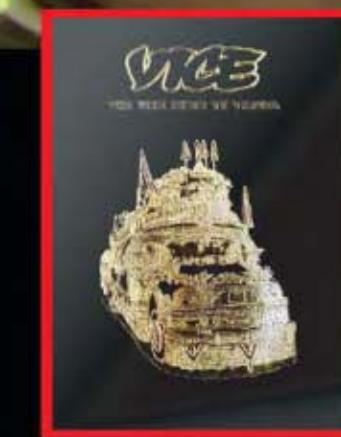
VICE STAFF:

We collated all the ratings of our Chinmoy friends. Here are the stats.

	ADIDAS	ASICS	PUMA	FILA
CONSTRUCTION	4.5	4	4	4
STABILITY	4	5	3.5	3
CUSHIONING	4.5	4.5	3.5	4
APPEARANCE	4	4	4	4



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AUM SHINRIKYO

This is the cult that attacked the Tokyo subway system with deadly sarin gas in 1995, killing 12 and at least somewhat fucking up close to 1,000 commuters.

Things are looser with these jokers since they've "turned a new leaf" and changed their name to Aleph, but if you want to look like an Aum monk or nun circa the halcyon sarin days, you'll need a loose white tunic with a round collar, some matching yoga pants like leader Shoko Asahara's, and a PSI (Perfect Salvation Initiation) unit to shock your brain waves into sync with the guru's. Since the pants err on the side of no pockets, you may also want to pick up a nice, sturdy fanny pack to keep all your things in should they let you leave the compound with any of your belongings. If you want to go for the full Shoko look, make like the Angry Samoans and jam a fork in your eyes. The fucker's blind.



LA EME (SUREÑOS)

This Latino version of the Crips looks exactly like those little Homies figurines. All you need are some blue plaid shirts, blue baseball jerseys, and a blue bandana on top of boxy khaki pants worn high up around the waist (kind of like Ed Grimley). Their main sign is the number 13 for M (for "eMe" / "Mexican Mafia"), but they consider all odd numbers their own. To make sure your allegiances are straight, you ought to wear the back of your hair rounded off, and put three creases in the back of all your shirts (odd numbers, remember?).

DRESS THE PART!

Gangs and Cults by Design



NUWAUBIANS

Rules, rules, rules. That's what gangs and cults offer their members. And that's what the members want. People who join gangs are looking for a family, which means they are looking for a mommy and a daddy, which means they want to be told how to do everything, from whom to hate to where to live to what to drink to how to dress.

Just look at how anal these guys get...

ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. PENRY



CRIPS



BLOODS

This one is simple: Blue pants, blue flannel shirt or team jersey (bonus points for a team with "C" in their name, like UNC), a blue bandana, a blue cap, and a pair of British Knights [aka "Blood Killers"]. Now go kill someone wearing red.



HARE KRISHNAS



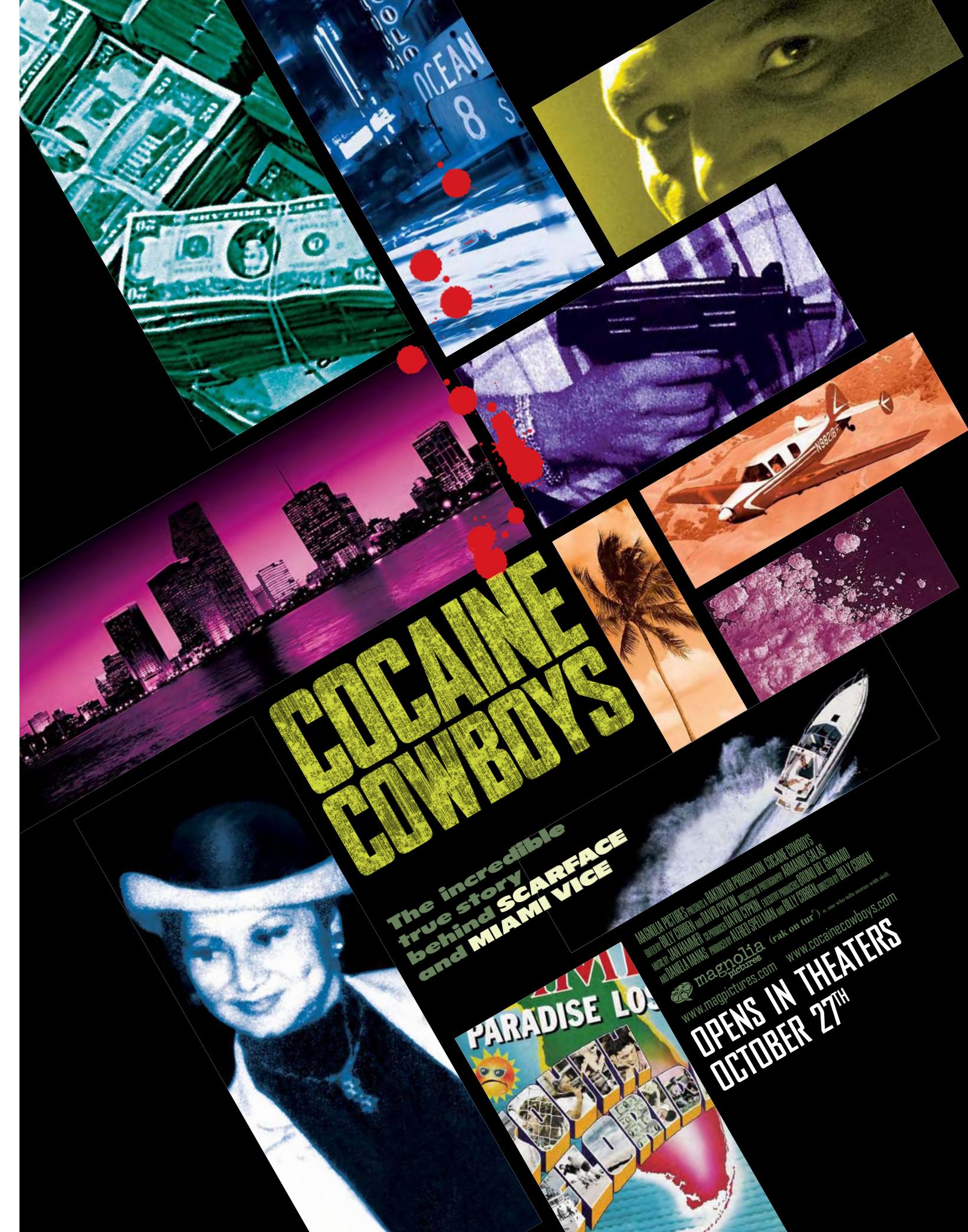
DEVOtees OF YELLAMMA

Men are supposed to wear *dbotis* (robes) over their *kurtas* (shirts), for women it's *saris* (girl robes) over their *cholis* (girl shirts). Only married men wear the saffron robes. Everybody else is in all white and supposed to remain celibate. Both guys and gals wear necklaces made from tulasi wood (sacred to the Krishnas) and get up early to draw sacred markings in clay on their foreheads, arms, chests, and tum-tums. Men shave their heads except for a tuft of hair called a *sikha*, while women leave theirs long and just braid it (we wish they had a goofy name for it, but they just call it a braid). The *sikha* signifies single-minded devotion to the Krishna way.



ARYAN NATIONS

The Yellammite look is basically just Krishna in drag. Take a brightly colored sari (don't feel hemmed in by dull old white and saffron), smear some horizontal lines of vermillion and turmeric across your forehead, then go to town with the cowry-shell earrings, necklaces, and crowns. Once you look just enough like an ugly woman to raise doubts, balance a cowry-beaded basket containing a statue of your goddess on your head and start acting really dirty in public. If a crowd of hissing women and shopkeepers gathers around you and starts throwing stones, you'll know you've nailed it.





ALMIGHTY GAYLORDS

Yes, that's their name. Besides being the biggest, oldest, and toughest white gang in Chicago, the Almighty Gaylords don't give a flying fuck if you think their name is fruity.

First things first if you're going to be a Gaylord: You'll need a varsity-style sweater in the gang's colors, blue and black. Get a longer one with a belt if karate's more your vibe. Either

way you should actually get two, one mostly black with blue trim for trouble-making and one mostly blue with black trim for partying. Don't let anybody make off with the extra while you're changing! Getting your sweater stolen is as bad as having your ass kicked, and often happens in conjunction with it. Feel free to deck out your sweat with patches of the Gaylord logo; giant, ornate crosses; or even flaming swastika-emblazoned skulls surrounded by Klansmen. If you don't have enough room to fit something in, just include it on your gang business card, which you'll be handing out to people to freak them out (no joke).



THE PROCESS CHURCH OF FINAL JUDGEMENT

This fucked-up Scientology splinter group may have bit the dust in the 70s, but their legacy of looking awesome will never die. Considering that the basic Process streetwear consisted of a black cape over a black turtleneck and pants, under long hair, beards, and a silver cross or pseudo-swastika amulet, how can you blame Manson for pretending to be a member?

If you really want to blow out the King Diamond fashion jams, look up some photos of one of their services. Crazy red tunics and Goat of Mendes pendants abound. Get 'er done!



BLACK GANGSTER DISCIPLES

These guys' deal is black, white, and gray, so feel free to incorporate some Oakland Raiders shit into the mix even if you can't name a single member of their team. You may also want to get tattoos on your torso and arms of some of their symbols, like the Star of David (its six points represent wisdom, knowledge, understanding, life, love, and loyalty), 360° (it represents the gang's "full circle of knowledge." Huh?), two crossed pitchforks, a winged heart (like in *Nintendo's Kid Icarus*), and a devil's tail. Or you could just smash them all into one omnilogos. Get 'er done!



NUESTRA FAMILIA (NORTEÑOS)

How about some more Bloods? To look like a Latino Blood you'll need to get decked out in red cholo-wear, wear saggy khakis off your ass, get tattoos of the number 14 (for N) or other even numbers, crease your shirt twice, get your hair tapered in the back... Are you picking up a pattern? Why can't anybody come up with their own shit instead of just picking "not the other guys." It's like the definition of Canadian identity all over again. To be fair though, the NF didn't rip off the Eme for the *huegla*-bird-and-star tattoo you get when you've killed somebody—they stole that from Cesar Chavez.



MUNGIKI

This mysterious Kenyan sect wants to live in a totally pre-Colonial way. That means not only "Fuck Christianity," but also "Circumcise all women."

To be an ideal Mungiki, you'd have to eschew all forms of Western dress in favor of traditional Kikuyu robes, but fortunately the only times most cult members care about this rule is when women break it. Then they get smacked around or, as we can't stress enough, CIRCUMCISED. You can generally get away with just growing the dreadlocks and doing snuff out of ivory horns and forcibly stripping (or circumcising) any women you see in pants or short skirts.



HEAVEN'S GATE

There are only a few stragglers left who missed the boat back in '98, but to blend in with the left-behinds, you'll need a pair of baggy black pants and matching dress shirt (buttoned all the way up), a good unisex buzzcut, and, if you're a guy, you may want to look into castration. This'll help you get used to the asexual life you'll be leading as a spirit once the Hale-Bopp comet swings back by to pick you up. You should also acquire a pair of black-and-white Nike Cortezes, an "Away Team" patch for your shirt, and a purple silk shroud to cover the plastic bag you've wrapped around your face as a fail-safe for the poison.



NATION OF ISLAM

To fit in with Farrakhan's cronies you'll want to look as neat as possible. For the ladies, this means a nice conservative dress in toned-down colors (not too tight) and an Erykah Badu-style head-wrap. For the fellas, a well-fitting suit and bow tie with short hair will do the trick. If you want to pass for one of the Reverend's elite Fruit of Islam brigade, you'll need to get your hands on one of their black bell-hop-looking uniforms, a squat, cylindrical hat like French cops used to wear with the letters "FOI" across the front, and a red bow tie. Sunglasses might come in handy for carrying off the proper seriousness.

Emily Haines
KNIVES DON'T HAVE YOUR BACK

4 out of 5 Review:
"Knives Don't Have Your Back is like the soundtrack to an excellent Alfred Hitchcock film."
-Alternative Press

"A haunting collection of piano driven tracks ... Haines possesses vocal and lyrical prowess that encourage listening ... This is a lovely record."
- Under The Radar

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HELL'S ANGELS

First off, you ought to be at least a little fat. Either that or the really turkey-necked kind of skinny where your shirt swings off you if there's something in the chest pocket. From there you'll need a good, broken-in pair of boots, a dusty pair of black jeans, some sort of torn-up vulgar t-shirt, then a vest and/or jacket in either leather or denim. The jacket or vest should bear the following patches: A big one of the winged-skull logo on the back with "Hell's Angels" above it, your city below it, and a little "MC" to the right kind of like the trademark emblem; a diamond with "1%" somewhere on the front to indicate that you're an "outlaw biker"; the word "Dequiallo" in gothic font to indicate that you've fought the pigs; and 666 for FFF or "Filthy Few Forever" if you've murdered. To add to the mishmash, you'll probably want to get the following abbreviations tattooed somewhere on your person: AFFA for "Angel Forever Forever an Angel" and the numbers 8 and 1 for letters H and A.



MS-13

Time was you could just look like a long-haired stoner and be mistaken for a Mara Salvatrucha member. Nowadays it's going to take a lot more effort. To start with, you should be sporting as much blue and white gear as possible (Honduras's national colors). Next, proceed to cover as much of your body as possible in tattoos of the letters M and S, the number 13, daggers, crossbones, and dice. Include your face as part of the palette please.



BAHALA NA GANG

Basically the Filipino version of the Bloods. They get question-mark tattoos (*bahala na* is the Filipino equivalent of *que sera, sera*, or "come what may"), and dress exactly like their black counterparts. Bahala Na was born in the jails of the Philippines in the 1940s, right after the hell of being occupied by Japan during WWII. For more on Filipino gangs, see page 107 of this issue.



CHING-A-LINGS

All you have to do to pull this one off is take your standard long-haired biker look, add a huge swastika to the back of your vest or jacket (you can sub in an iron cross with the initials FTW in the top three arms if you're a pussy), and be Puerto Rican. You can try to memorize the convoluted explanation they've got for how they're really "taking the symbols back" from the Nazis, or you can just settle for getting their logo tattooed on your back and having several shared wives.



RESTORATION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

These Ugandan spazzes try to avoid talking just in case they break the commandment against "giving false witness." The wardrobe for this cult depends on how high up you want to be in the hierarchy. New initiates wear a long black robe with a wimple, like a nun's. Once you have "Seen the Ten Commandments" (read: given them all your money) you get to trade out your black robe for a green one, and once you graduate from there to "Ready to Die in the Ark," you get a new green one with a white lining. To pass yourself off as a leader, you need an all-white robe, and a can of gasoline with which you can douse your followers before setting them ablaze.



THE BRETHREN / GARBAGE EATERS

These extreme Christians live as nomads, traveling the land, eating out of Dumpsters, and ranting about Jesus. In other words, they are bums. The only difference is that they think they have it all figured out.

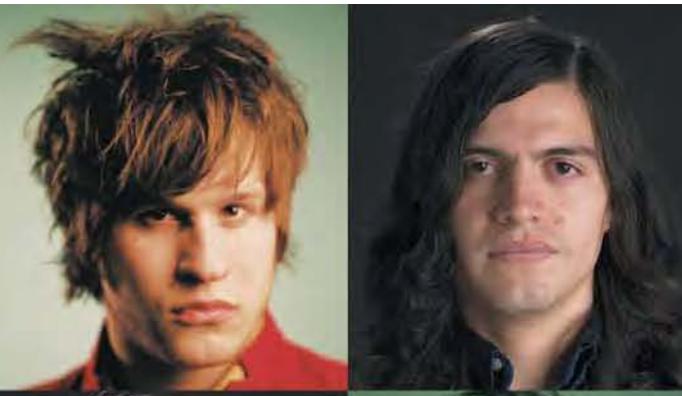


MASTERS OF DESTRUCTION

All right, fuck this. There's just too many Bloods. Why? Many gang experts speculate that their ubiquity may simply be due to the fact that red looks great and it goes with almost everything (except pink, which is for queers, and orange, which is for old ladies).

So, if you want to be a Brethren, guys should don a drab-colored, knee-length tunic (be sure to put some slits up the sides for ease of bicycling, which they do a lot), grow their beards out, and keep the rest of their hair trim and neat. Girls should wear long-sleeved dresses that go down to their feet, even in summer, let their hair grow long, and never wear makeup, jewelry, or be in public without a male brethren. Otherwise, they are blasphemous whores who deserve to be date-raped by Satan himself.

When compared to the Filipino Bloods, all the Hispanic Bloods, and even the original Bloods, the Hmong gangs get a zero for creativity.



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Only lesbians and nerds are into Lara Croft. If you are a truly healthy heterosexual male you should have a gray, fury boner right now because this piece of perfection makes you feel like an evil wolf. Sorry to sound so rapey. Of course consent is a big part of it, but truth be told this is a lot more appealing to men than some "kick ass" chick that does a backflip and then shoots the head off a rattlesnake.



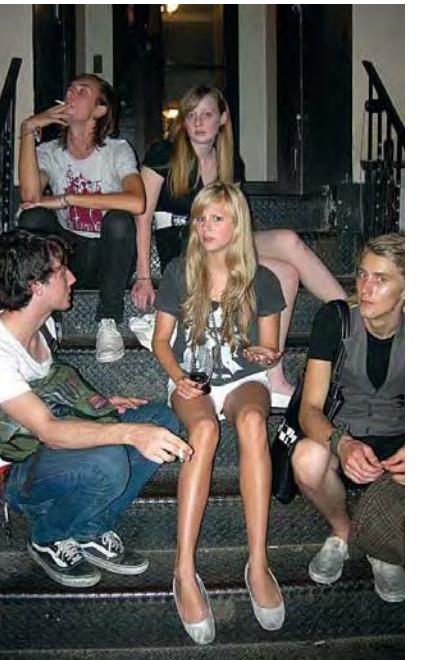
You know what? Fuck punk. And fuck trying to be a hippie. They both take too long. Everyone under 20 needs to become a rockabilly. The hair's a cinch, the shoes make you look tall, and unless you're living with your granddad in Alabama, it's actually become rebellious again.



If you mix Cirque du Soleil teacher, Living Colour groupie, and homeless biker you end up with a hodgepodge that cancels the bad parts out of the ingredients and makes a whole new person.



This girl looks like rap the first week it came out, before the whole thing became a bunch of fucking idiots on crack spending money they don't have on the stupidest bullshit since *The Beverly Hillbillies*.



If you were never accepted by the in-crowd during adolescence, one trick is to grow up, make tons of money, move to Manhattan's Lower East Side, have kids like this, and give them whatever they want their whole lives. Then you can just go, "Let me hang out and be cool or you're all grounded!"





Makeup is OK if you're a Vegas showgirl or a drag queen or a burn victim with something to hide, but the rest of you need to stop trying to draw a pretty face on your face.



He sees himself as a disco snowflake version of Edith Piaf just before she killed her lover in a crime of passion but we see a pathetic old queer that has taken "fuck it" so far it's become "I'm fucked."



Nobody expects transexuals to have any self-esteem but decorating your body with used condoms is a level of rock bottom even the "God Hates Fags" guy would think was too harsh.



Going out to clubs after you're 40 is like holding your breath until it gets to the chest-ache part, only the pain is in the back where you've roped in the past 15 years of unwanted cellulite.



This guy looks like the kind of drunken douchebag who tries to beat up Steve Aoki, pisses on girls' legs, disappears on the beach with another girl (who comes back later bawling her eyes out), says he is best friends with Erik Lavoie, gets kicked off the bus three hours outside of New York, and then gets fired.

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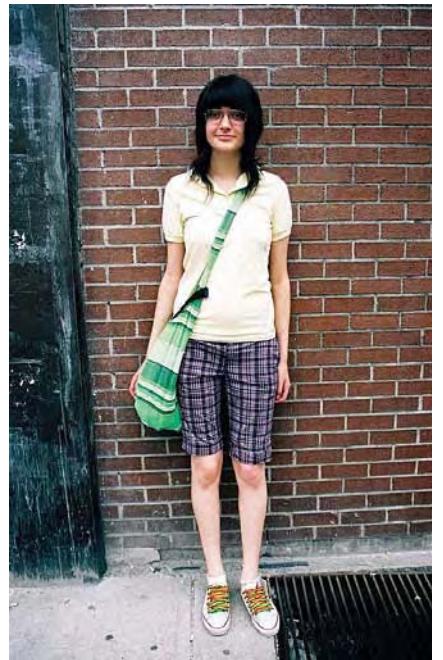




We like to pretend that New York City is the greatest place on earth, but you know that's bullshit. You know your little scene with your friends and your inside jokes is all that matters. That's "cooler" than any stupid party you read about over on Last Night's Party.



Oh, who are we kidding? Of course New York City is the greatest place on earth.



It would be funny to give this cutie to Prince the next time he says, "You don't have to be cool to rule my world," because you know he couldn't hang. Poser.



East Indians have high IQs, which makes things real interesting when they completely lose their fucking minds.



There's something about a perfect 70s dad beard and tight Built by Wendy clothes that makes you look like the kind of guy that can bring the boat to the dock, jump out, and tie it up all by yourself while we all sit back and chortle, "Shit, Carl."

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I know you don't do blind dates anymore but if you're into shithead big babies that waste money, this guy is perfect for you. He has a two-foot-long piece of excrement for hair and he rides around on a \$2,000 bicycle even though he's a grown-ass man. Interested?



This guy looks like a time traveler from the year Two Thousand and Fucking Loser.



Why is it the people with the least artistic and literary savvy are the ones the most devoted to the art of permanent drawings/sayings?



Jesus people, relax. You're not going to fall. Does anyone even know anyone that got hit by a car while Rollerblading or had a plastic bike helmet save their life? No. Safety is a scam and only retard wears helmets.



Hey Jeffrey from *Proj Run*, floppy hoods are for five-year-old girls who just got out of the bath.



photo: Adam Amengual

Adam Amengual
Photographer
East Williamsburg, Brooklyn
www.adamamengual.com

*Someone once said to me,
"You're either a picture
TAKER or a picture MAKER."
I think I'm a bit of both.*



All clothes model's own

ANGELO—The Italian Dukes, Little Italy

We had a gang that started in high school. We called ourselves the Italian Dukes. We were so fuckin' broke, we had six jackets and maybe 30 guys. So every day somebody else would wear the jackets at school. We went to Seward Park High School, and it was mostly Jews. They were all afraid of us. We didn't even have to do anything. It got to a point where a gang called the Fordham Baldies—who were like the biggest Italian gang in the Bronx—heard about us and came down and made us a brother club. They were like, "Who's the president?" and a couple of guys went over, and we had this truce. They talked about it, shook hands, and then we were brother clubs. If anything happened to one of us, we had all of these guys. So from being 30 guys with six jackets, we became a thousand just by hooking up with them. It also made us brother clubs with the Redwings, who were in East Harlem. They were a big crew—white gang, mostly Italian.

We'd hang out in the park at night. All the gangs were there: The Sportsmen, that was a big black gang, pretty tough guys, and the Dragons, that was the Puerto Rican gang. They heard that the Italian Dukes were brother gangs with the Fordham Baldies, so if you were walking around with an Italian Dukes jacket, they didn't fuck with you. And I tell you, it was a great fuckin' scam.

Nobody would fuck with us. Italians were Italians in those days. No matter where you went, even the toughest gangs—fuckin' Puerto Ricans, blacks, whatever—they wouldn't fuck with us. Our gang was the wiseguys, you know what I mean? And nobody could fuck with that.

It was a sanctuary, this rectangle here. Houston Street down to Canal, and Bowery over to Lafayette. Little Italy was strictly Italian. There was one Irish kid, I think, and one black kid. His father was a building super. He wanted to hang out so bad that he let us call him Snowball.

They had another Italian neighborhood, down on Cherry Street and Madison that was just the same as ours. If we had a problem between us, we'd all go meet over at City Hall and wear different color bandanas so people knew where you were from. The two toughest guys would fight it out, and that was how it worked. You weren't even allowed to kick the guy once he was down. Two friends of mine once had to fight at Coney Island because that's where the argument happened. They fought on the handball

court with no shoes on. And I tell you, *that* was a fuckin' fight. At the end they looked like gladiators.

You had to have respect. For everybody—especially our people but even for strangers, what we called Merigans, like "Amerigans"—we had respect for all of them. We didn't shake nobody down or hurt nobody. In fact, we protected people. We protected women. If two women came into a bar, they never paid for a drink and nobody even went over to talk to them.

Before the pill, you mostly just had blowjobs. That was it. From the Jewish girls mostly, not from Catholic girls—not when I was a kid. Now all girls think giving a blowjob is nothing. They had some young girls on like *Oprah* or something who said that. They were like, "Oh, it's not bad. If you don't do it, you're not part of the crew."

But back then, if you had a girlfriend, if you were getting laid, you were the king of the mountain. When the pill came, every-

Before the pill, you just had blowjobs. That was it. From the Jewish girls mostly, not from Catholic girls—not when I was a kid.

thing changed. Before that, date rape was the usual. I mean, I could have been arrested for date rape a million times. Any girl that wasn't a virgin, if you went out with her you couldn't let her get away, because there weren't many around. There was hookers too—hookers is what we mostly fucked. I lost my virginity at like 14. Me and a couple friends of mine went to a hooker. I gave her two bucks and I came in about two seconds, then went home and jerked off ten times thinking about it.

Oh yeah, and if you went down on a girl then, you couldn't walk around the neighborhood afterward. I swear to God. I mean, I know I never did it.

I was a heroin addict from the age of maybe 13 to 17, but not like a falling-down addict. I snorted it, sometimes I shot it, but not often. I would buy it from Italian guys over on Avenue D, but not guys that we actually knew. That was like Jersey to me, Avenue D.

There were opium dens down in Chinatown.

We ran out of a restaurant without paying one time, ran down into this building, and they had like catacombs. They still have them down there, these buildings where the cellars have all these different rooms. I was trying to find my way out, and I went into this room and there was an opium den. All these people laying down on cots and shit, with these pipes, and one guy tending them. That freaked me out. I didn't do that. Only Chinese guys did opium. But down in Chinatown, you could buy a tin of cocaine snuff for 25 cents. I think snuff is much worse than cocaine. I've snorted a lot of cocaine in my fuckin' life, but these guys I know who used to do snuff, their noses used to fuckin' bleed. It's much harsher than coke. It's cheaper than coke, and you get whacked on it. You get high.

Anyway, we weren't vicious kids. We were just crooks, you know what I mean? You lived in an apartment with four rooms and four people, and it was so close that you really lived in the street because you had to get out of the house. And then when you're like 13 or 14, you start to hang out a little bit and the older guys start to notice you and start to talk to you and before you knew it you'd been groomed into what they were.

There were some crazy kids, though. Anybody who had a "Boy" after their name—Johnny Boy, Frankie Boy—they were always in trouble, cause they were always trying to prove they were a man. This guy Frankie Boy was my best friend because he was really tough and I wasn't. Me and him got along because there was no competition and we really loved each other. He died in a tragic fuckin' condition. He got hit in the head with a two-by-four, and it numbed him. It made his brain all fucked-up. He lived like that for a long time. He used to shake when he walked and shit like that. His mind was OK, but he'd be talking and he'd start laughing cause he couldn't help it. His laugh reflex got fucked-up.

It was a black guy who did it to him, in a fight over a girl. They were on the highway, and the guy said something out the window to his girl, and they went back and forth, then finally pulled off the highway up by Bryant Park. I think Frankie got the best of him, and they got back in the cars, and Frankie chased him. Then they got out of the cars a second time and the guy ran away and Frankie ran after him. He was so fuckin' mad he didn't pay attention, and the guy went around the corner and when Frankie came after him, he was waiting, and hit him with a two-by-four—wham—right across the head.



ROBERT—*The Railroad Boys, East New York/Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn*

I was 13 or 14 when I started. We hung around Aberdeen Park. In the back of the park there was a cemetery, and in the cemetery there was a hill. Underneath the hill, there were the train tracks. It's where the old freight trains used to run out of Long Island City. We did most of our dirty business on the railroad tracks, so we got the name The Railroad Boys.

That was when the neighborhood was mostly German, Irish, and Italian. It was a gangster neighborhood. Murder Inc. came out of that neighborhood. John Gotti, too. When I was growing up, stealing old ladies' pocketbooks was the big thing. I remember the older guys coming around and passing the word that if any white kid in the neighborhood stole an old lady's pocketbook, they would have their hands and legs broken. That wasn't allowed in that neighborhood because that old lady may be some big shot gangster's relative. That was a typical night.

We had colors—blue sweaters. They had high collars, buttoned down, and on the back you had "RR." But we didn't really go out of our way too much with the sweaters and the costumes. Everybody knew who we were. We were trying to hide, actually, because the NYPD Youth Squad was always down here, asking us questions like who was who, and who was our leader.

There were no drugs then. That was right before the Kennedy assassination. After the Kennedy assassination, somebody opened up the door and let the drugs in. Our big thing was buying cough medicine. At that time you could buy the Robitussin AC, with codeine. If you drank that, it was like... forget about it. You were whacked out of your face. Also, we used to have a lot of gay guys come around and they'd get us a couple pills, some marijuana, and bullets for our zip guns. There was a guy called the Baron and a guy called Bob the Queer, and they'd get us whatever we wanted. They loved us, you know, because they were fags and they loved young kids. They'd hang around. I guess some guys, you know, went with them. I never did, but I know there were guys in the gang that did.

Mostly we drank wine. We were big wine drinkers. We'd drink Night Train. It was like 50 cents a bottle. Or we'd buy a 40-ounce bottle of Budweiser, a quart of Ballantine, sit up on the hill and drink that.

On a warm Saturday night, we'd all be up on the hill. A lot of the guys would be with their girlfriends. We'd cut a hole in the fence, go in the cemetery, and have make-out sessions. If you looked down the hill toward Evergreen Avenue, there was a schoolyard, and that's where all the black kids used to hang out. Their gang was the Comanchero Chaplains. We could see them from the hill.

We'd look down on them and they'd look up at us. Sometimes we'd say, "Come on up. You wanna have a game of football?" or sometimes we'd say, "F youse, we're gonna come down and kick your asses." When we were drinking, we'd scream down at them, "Hey, you fuckin' black bastards!" We'd say something racial, you know? And that would touch it off right away, because they'd start yelling back at us, and before you knew it, we'd be running down on the railroad tracks, they'd be running up. There would be 20 or 25 of them and 20 or 25 of us. We'd have sticks, bats, clubs, and bottles, and we'd just beat the heck out of each other until the cops came or until we got tired of it. A lot of times, people would come back all beat up and bruised. In them days, it was no big thing. You went home, you needed a couple of stitches, you know, you went to the neighborhood drugstore, you got butterfly stitches. That was a typical night.

But you gotta remember one thing: When we were kids, we didn't have to kill anybody. I mean, we liked to have a good old-fashioned fight and beat the hell outta each other, but we never had no intentions of, "Let's go down there and kill a few of 'em." We all lived in the same neighborhood—that was another reason why we weren't out to kill each other. The parents always got along, and we always respected their parents and they respected our parents. Everyone had a little more respect in them days. Like if we were walking down the street and we saw one of the Spanish guys with his girlfriend, we wouldn't beat him up. We would let him go because he was with his girl. Or if he was with his mother, we wouldn't say nothing to him. If he was alone, he got his ass kicked. It worked the same way for us when we were in their neighborhood.

One summer, we got into it with the Spanish gang. They were called the Flaming Satans. The Spanish guys were different. When we'd fight with the black guys, it was more or less hit and run. But when we'd fight the Spanish guys, they'd stand there. I'll be honest with you, the Spanish guys had a little more guts than the black guys. We'd see them coming, walking up Bushwick Avenue in a line of like 20 abreast. So we'd form a line, walk right down and stop. All of a sudden we'd start hitting each other. They were knife-happy. When they started with the knives, we started with the zip guns.

To make a zip gun you buy a cap gun. You stick a car antenna in it and file down the part that you cock back—the hammer. Then you tie the hammer up with rubber bands, pull it back, and let it go. The force would cause the rubber band to shoot a .22 bullet.

We used to wrap the gun up with a lot of tape, because those things had a tendency to blow up in your hands. They weren't very accurate, either. We'd fire at a guy standing three feet away, and we'd miss. But it made a big noise and a flash of light. It would scare people. But that didn't last too long once they got used to it. Plus, if you had a leather jacket on and I shot you, chances are the bullet wouldn't even go through the jacket. They weren't really that strong of a weapon.

One of our guys got stabbed 20 times by the Flaming Satans. They punctured his lung and he almost died. About a month later, when he got out of the hospital, they invaded us again. This time we were up on the roofs throwing things down on them: Bricks, bottles, cans... you could kill somebody if you hit 'em with a garbage can of rocks from 50 feet up. But still, they found the same guy who got stabbed before. He was out on the street. They cornered him, stabbed him three times, and shot him in the ass.

That was the year when it started getting real serious. *Life* magazine ran a big story on us. Then of course the cops picked up on it, and it got to be really tough. We were in the papers more than the president. Finally the Youth Squad—the special police squad they set up just to deal with the gang problem—got involved. They made us have a big meeting in Junior High School 73. Us, the Chaplains, and the Spanish guys all got together and they gave us an ultimatum: Either we made peace or we were gonna start going to jail.

In the 60s, the Puerto Ricans and blacks were coming in like there was no tomorrow. One of us would move out of a place, and ten families would move in. Over the course of one or two summers, they outnumbered us. We went down one night, had a fight with them, and I'll never forget it: We chased them all the way down Evergreen Avenue, and all of a sudden about 60 or 70 of them came out of a house. There were like 20 of us. That's when we started realizing that we had lost the numbers. It wasn't too hard to see the handwriting on the wall.

A lot of the guys started moving out of the neighborhood or going off to Vietnam. Little by little the white gang broke up. We had nobody left, so we said, "What's the use in fighting?" We got to the point where we got older, we had girlfriends, we started getting cars, and we left the neighborhood. We were able to do that, whereas the newcomers weren't. So they kept the neighborhood. From time to time, we'd bump into them and they'd make fun of us like, "Hey, we got your park. We got your neighborhood." And we'd turn around and say, "Yeah, yeah, you got so much. You won. Big deal."



FREDDIE—The Railroad Boys, East New York/Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn

We went to Our Lady of Lourdes Grammar School on Aberdeen Street. On the next block, one block past Bushwick Avenue, was Aberdeen Park. We went up there and basically we started hanging out and we became the Railroad Boys. The gang was started around 1955 by the older guys. I joined around 1960, when I was 13. We had a lot of guys in the gang—sometimes we had 40, sometimes we had 60, sometimes we had 100. It was a crazy neighborhood. A lot of shit went on. We quit school at 16, and we went up to the park, we drank wine, and we ran up and down the street beating each other up. A lot of guys got hurt, and a couple of guys got hurt really bad. We had no real guns, just the ones that we made, which were a joke. It really wasn't a good way to come up, but that's just the way the neighborhood was. You lived in the neighborhood, you joined a gang. That was it. When you left your house you had to worry about somebody grabbing you and kicking your ass. You usually carried a knife, something to protect you.

I lived on Fulton and Rockaway, which was home to another crew, the Fulton and Rockaway Boys. There were a bunch of white gangs fighting each other. Then, you know, the blacks started coming in and naturally there was tension and we banded together. They banded together too, and that's the way it went. It was an opportunistic thing.

I got stabbed in the head one day with an umbrella. Wasn't too much of a fight. There were six of them and two of us. I got my head split open with a piano leg one night too. Wrong place, wrong time. You're walking down the street, you see somebody that you don't like, who isn't in your gang. He might have been black, he might have been Puerto Rican, and then that was it, the shit started. If we caught someone, we gave 'em a beating.

You could also take a chimney apart—grab a couple bricks and throw those. We had a riot on Fulton Street one time, and that's what we did. We ran up there, disassembled a few chimneys, and took some bricks and some bottles. We went to the

roof above this nightclub and when they started coming out, we just rained bottles and bricks down on their heads. This was on Fulton and Rockaway, a half block from my house. I got locked up with another friend of mine. We spent a couple nights in jail. We were the two stupid guys that got caught. Everybody else ran.

When you got caught doing something, they handcuffed you, took you down to the precinct, beat the shit outta ya', then took the information down. What they had at that time was called the Youth Squad. It was a bunch of detectives whose primary job was to try and keep tabs on the gangs and see what was going on. They gave you your JD card, which means juvenile delinquent, so that was the label you carried, you know what I mean? Then you were on file. But like I said, yeah, the cops beat your ass. By today's standards, there would have been a lot more lawsuits. But that's the way they did it in those days. Did it help? Sometimes. And sometimes it didn't.

There were real gangsters around too. They ran books, they stole, they shylocked money... They ran the neighborhood, whatever they did. These are the people that we grew up with. You see it firsthand, and it's all bullshit really. Big car, big wallet, and next thing you know they're doing fifty years in jail. Or you find them in a car, dead. That's the way the neighborhood was. That was East New York.

I went into the service in '66. A lot of my buddies went in. The ones that didn't go in are the ones that died along the way. Overdosed, stuff like that. Heroin was a big thing in the 60s. It took a lot of people out. Eventually, if you hung out in that neighborhood you tried pills or pot, or whatever other crap came into town. So a lot of guys OD'd. Lot of guys went to jail. I only see a couple guys from the neighborhood now. The rest of them are scattered to the wind.



Jeans by Levi's

TONY—*The Majestics, Williamsburg, Brooklyn*

The Majestics started in the early 70s. It didn't begin as a crime thing. It started as a dance club, and as things happened in the club—arguments and fights—it became a gang.

You could see how things escalated. First, five guys would go into a club and do a dance routine. Then another five would do another dance routine, and it became like a fucking dance-off. If you made someone look bad, they'd wanna retaliate. Next thing you knew, you'd be fighting. And then it got built up even more. The next time you went to the club, they'd be there and it would be like, "Oh, we had a fight with these guys last time. We gotta watch our back." You'd bring a girl with you so she could hold the gun.

Eventually everybody said, "We're not going to dance no more. Now we're going to wear these denim jackets with patches on them." And then all of a sudden, you'd find yourself claiming a piece of Brooklyn as your fuckin' real estate. Everything was about turf. This was way before anybody was selling drugs. It was just: "This is your part of Brooklyn, this is my part of Brooklyn." It got to the point where you couldn't walk outside of a radius of five or ten blocks. Our turf was Lee Avenue and Lynch Street.

In Williamsburg, where we were, it was the Majestics, the Dukes, the Unknown Bikers, South 9 Bikers, Spanish Kings, Devil Rebels, Dirty Ones, and a bunch more. Not every club was friendly. Basically, the Dirty Ones was the only gang that was friendly with us. They were a very big club. At our peak, we were only about 100 strong, but the Dirty Ones had chapters in Bay Ridge and the Bronx. Unknown Bikers were just big in Williamsburg, South 9 Bikers the same. All of us went to school together. In that neighborhood, if you weren't in a gang, you just went to school and you were fine, but if you were in a gang your chances of survival were 50/50. Your chances of going to jail were even worse.

If you walked by somebody's block, they would chase you, shoot at you, and beat you down if they caught you. The rivalry was like what you see in movies and worse, because gangs back then, the people they hung out with meant more to them than their family. They were with them most of the day.

I'd get up, go to my friend's house at eight in the morning, and knock on his door. Wake him up, hustle. Hustle to get money for breakfast, eat, get high. Walk all the way back to where we live, just to get high, then hustle again to get lunch. Our drug of choice then was heroin. We weren't selling, we were just using. I never shot up. I always sniffed. One of my friends who I wanted to get high with said, "You wanna get high, you gotta watch this." And he shot up and he said, "I'm doing this so you can see what I do," and I said, "I don't want nothing to do with that." And I never did it. I was satisfied with sniffing.

Robbing and stealing wasn't a big thing. People hustled their money. Mostly it was breaking into factories in Brooklyn. Factories close up at night, you break in, get what you want, and sell it. We'd break into cars, stuff like that. We were never really into robbing people. A car can sit on the street two or three days today. Back then, if a car sat for a day, we'd strip it. We spent a night one time stripping a whole car completely down to the chassis. We had everything sold by sunrise. We had a buyer for every piece—not even from garages. We sold it right on the street.

During the day we'd just be hanging out, walking the streets of Brooklyn, meeting people, going to parties. Then we'd be getting high all night till the sun came up, going to the beach, listening to music. We would hang out in these abandoned buildings that we had electricity running into. Later on we had a clubhouse where we'd hang out all the time. It was all music and sex and everybody getting high. Before we started getting high on dope, we were sniffing glue. That was the big thing. After that it was acid—Purple Haze. We'd get high and go into the city.

42nd Street was like Mecca, where all the gangs would hang out on Friday night. If the cops wanted to see who was who, they just had to look there on Friday and Saturday night because everybody wore their patches, all dressed up down to their boots. Any gear you could put on, no matter how hot or cold it was, you went to 42nd and wore your colors proudly. The biggest place we would go was the Starship. It was on 42nd between Eighth and Ninth in the back of a parking lot. Not many fights broke out there. 42nd Street was like a neutral area, unless you ran into clubs from different boroughs. The Brooklyn clubs were OK, but the clubs from the Bronx and Queens—the Savage Skulls, the Nomads—they could cause some problems. We'd get harassed by the cops all the time, but then again, that was a time when if you had a fight on the street, the cops would grab you, kick you in the ass, and send you on your way like, "Get outta here. Go home."

Nowadays, everybody's got a gun or a knife. Nobody fights to hurt anymore. Everybody fights to kill. Everybody wants to make a name for themselves, a reputation. Back then you just hung out with the right people. That's all you needed, was to have on the back of your jacket: "The Majestics."

We had like one pistol, and that was for everybody, because every now and then you had a confrontation that would require it. It was something for show. You know, you pull it out or you just display it, and people say, "OK, we're not gonna mess around." Most of the time when you would shoot, you did it not to hurt somebody, but to scare them. You'd fire a round in the air, and they'd say, "Oh shit, they're shooting," and they'd run.

Violence back then, if you put it on a scale, I'd say it was about a seven. If you were out to get a guy, you wanted to put him in the hospital. You wanted to teach him a lesson. Sometimes people got hit by cars. You push a guy up against a wall with a car, just push him till he hits the wall. That happened a lot. It was also common for someone to be walking down the street, and a car would stop, and a bunch of guys would jump out and beat on him. Because if you were in the wrong place at the wrong time, you took an ass whupping. There was nothing you could do about it. It was because of who you were. Everybody knew who was who.

The bond between people who were in gangs was amazing. For instance, my friend Dusty got stabbed, and he came back from the Bronx really late, and I hung out with him the whole night at the hospital. He got stitched up, and we hung out and got high afterward. When we were done I carried him up four flights of stairs on my shoulders to his house, stoned out of my head. Because we were like brothers. To this day, we still hang out, and we'd do anything for each other. You know, if somebody needed to get high, you made sure they got high; if someone got locked up, you make sure when they got out, you threw a party.

But as things started to change and people started with the drugs, making money off of it, a lot of violence erupted. It wasn't about, "This is where we're hanging out," anymore. It became, "This is where we're selling drugs." People were having shootouts left and right. Some people were robbing other gangs for their drugs. They said, "Why should I buy drugs to sell when I can steal his and sell them?" It happened all the time. I saw a lot of people get killed and a lot of people go to jail. The gangs started separating. People started making money on their own and they forgot about their buddies. Heroin was the drug of choice. Coke was popular when it first came out, but heroin was the drug of choice because it was a better high. It made more money. It was easier to sell. I lived down the block from an armory, and there was a sergeant who would come every morning and buy seven bags of dope. That's how popular heroin was.

Right now, the Majestics is a motorcycle club. All those clubs that were fighting back then hang out together now. We buried each other's brothers too much. So we all hang out now, go to parties, things like that. I don't want to glorify it, because for today's youth there's nothing to glorify in gangs, but back then it was what we did to survive. I buried three of my brothers because of being in gangs and being involved in drugs and living in the ghetto. If you want to talk about family members alone, I've lost five. I go to a funeral now and I don't even cry. I don't have any emotions anymore.



Sweater by United Bamboo, jeans by Levi's

VICTOR—The Majestics, Williamsburg, Brooklyn

Everything started out with sweaters. From the sweaters we went to a shirt, and from the shirt we finally got to patches. There was always some guy who got beat up and they took the sweater and we had to go find out who took it and get it back. We started saying, "Why don't we make patches?" And finally we did.

It was like one big family. We all got along. We never had problems against each other, because we grew up in the same neighborhood. We went to the same school and we were all young. My brother Alex started wearing patches when he was hanging out with this other club, the Dirty Ones. Then he became the President of the Majestics. When he died, my brother Carlos took over. And then he died.

We had a clubhouse. We were always there. Rainy days, we'd be inside watching TV. It was an abandoned building. We had the apartment on the first floor and even the old guys from the neighborhood would come in and play cards and dominoes. Some of the cops knew us too.

Yeah, it was nice. Actually, I wish I could go back a couple years. We had fun. The 70s was real nice. In the summer we were always out there, like 15 or 20 of us, sitting on the steps in summer, drinking beer and bullshitting.

Problem-wise, you know, we had a few here and there. Ducking from shootouts and things like that. We didn't mess with the people from the neighborhood. If anything, we'd protect them. I knew so many people that everybody would open their doors for me. People from the neighborhood never called the cops on us because we were never troublemakers. That was our block, so we had to protect everybody from other people who would come in and mess up the block. We never went crazy in our neighborhood, and whoever did, they would hear about it from

us the next day. The last thing we wanted was heat on the block. Because then you can't be in your own neighborhood carrying a pistol.

I had a very bad temper back then. I didn't take no shit from nobody. If I had to stick you, I would stick you. I used to walk around with a gun every day. I carried a .25, then later a 9 mm. I was always aware. I never let anybody get close to me or walk behind me. One time, something had happened so I went looking for this guy to get him. I saw him on the corner at South 10th and Bedford, and I started shooting. I think I shot two or three times with my .25 before

If I had to stick you, I would stick you. I used to walk around with a gun every day. I carried a .25, then later a 9 mm.

it jammed. He didn't see where I was shooting from, so I ran like two or three cars up and hid under the last one. I think I was under that car for half an hour, until I heard my guys yelling my name.

When we were on Lee Avenue there was this black guy. He was from the Marcy Projects and he would always come down with a gun. This guy was always strapped. Every time he came by the block there was a shootout, so everybody was always aware when he was passing by. Everybody kept their eyes open. I heard that he was like that because his mother was killed. She used to be a dispatcher for a car service. There was a shootout and it so happens that she was working at that time, and she got killed. So this guy started going off with everybody.

Nobody ever bothered to call the cops, because everybody wanted to just take care of him. He must have had a vest, cause let me tell you, this guy had fucking balls. He was invincible. I used to hide sometimes on the corner and wait for him, just hoping to get him. But I never did. I think he got arrested. That was the end of him.

I never robbed anybody. It feels bad. Somebody else could come and rob your mother and you wouldn't like it. But I stole. I used to steal a lot from factories. Every Friday and Saturday night I would go to factories on Bedford Avenue, Wythe Avenue, and Flushing Avenue. I would go anywhere Jews worked because on Fridays, they can't put on the light, the air conditioning, nothing. That was my opportunity. I would break into the sweater factory, the clothes factory, the pillow factory... I even broke into a coffin factory one day. I got in, it was dark, and then when I put on the light all I saw was coffins, so I ran out. But yeah, I broke into every factory. That's how I used to get my money. I also had a guy who used to bring me cars for parts. Or somebody would tell me, "Listen, I got a van, brand new, and I wanna collect insurance." So he would tell me where he parked it. The guys and I would go and take it and strip the parts off and he'd get his insurance.

I got locked up in '80 and came out in '83. At that point, all everybody wanted to do was sell drugs. That's where the money was. My brothers were making money selling drugs but I didn't want to get into it. I was already scared by being in jail. Lots of guys were fucking up, but all I wanted was to have our club, and for everybody to have bikes and go places together and ride. That's all I ever wanted to do. I always used to buy magazines just to check out the bikes. I'm 46 now and I'm still with this thing. Now, everybody else has a bike. Me and my brother are probably the only ones that don't have a bike.



Army jacket by Lois Jeans

ALICAT—South 9th Bikers, Williamsburg, Brooklyn

I started hanging out with the Unknown Bikers around 1975, and I became one in 1976. I went over to the South 9th Bikers in early 1980, the same year I went to jail. We were all hanging out together already, the Unknowns and the South 9s. It was just that I started hanging out over here more than over at the other side.

I got into the gangs very, very early. Like 12 or 13. By the time I started with the Unknowns, I already had a little reputation. I was from one side of the Southside, and the Unknowns were from the other side. A lot of them I met through fighting with them. We just got along. That's when we were first coming up. Me and a few other guys started making a lot of noise, you know, fighting all these other gangs.

The South 9th Bikers' turf was around Broadway, from like where the BQE starts at Havemeyer to what was called Jew Town, where the Hasidics start. The Unknowns used to be from Union to Rodney, Metropolitan to like South 4th. The Dukes were on Roebling and South 3rd, over to South 1st. Then you had the Satan's Souls for a while, who were on South 5th and Hoover. Then you had all these other little clubs in between. You had the Dirty Ones up by Graham Avenue. There's still a lot of people around. You go to parties and see a lot of the same faces.

We used to look up to the Hell's Angels back then. We used to make choppers with four- and six-poles—extensions, you know? And we used to ride over to East 3rd in Manhattan, to the Hell's Angels, and visit with them and whatnot. We had a building on the Southside that we painted up with "Free Sonny Barger." He was the Hell's Angels' national president who was locked up at the time. So our style of dress and everything was like them. That's how the whole biker thing came about first. We were trying to imitate them.

We were fighting with everybody. We came into a lot of weapons at an early time. One guy's father was a hunter, and he went on vacation. The son made it seem like it was a burglary, and we made off with all his weapons. Some shotguns, a .30-06, a .30-30. The father ended up getting most of them back after people started getting arrested with them, because he came home and reported them stolen. Back then, gang-wise, there weren't too many guns used. Mostly a lot of chains, bats, and knives. Eventually, though, it got to where you were lucky to get within a block of each other. Everybody else had to shoot, because we already were.

We were always armed. It was nothing to have like three or four shootouts a day. It was like a game. I remember cars coming by and shooting at the guys, then we would

jump in the car and go after them. We'd be going across the Williamsburg Bridge, shooting at them, them shooting at us. To Manhattan, then back across the bridge, and once we got to Brooklyn they would just split off to their side and we'd keep driving to our side, like it was nothing.

Naturally, there were a lot of shot-up people. I would say, three out of every five shootouts, somebody would get hit. There's a lot of people walking around messed up to this day, and a lot of people dead. I caught a few. The only time I ever went to the hospital was the first time I got shot, because I didn't know what to expect. After that I knew it was nothing serious, so I never bothered to go to the hospital. Like one time, I saw it was clear through so I just patched it up, and for-

We were always armed. It was nothing to have like three or four shootouts a day.

got about it. Or if you get hit with a shotgun, forget it. If it ain't from close range, you just have to wait for the pellets to come out later. I guess I was lucky. I wasn't hit too often.

What was so funny was that a lot of the people were intermingled, family-wise. This guy's sister might be living with that guy's brother, or you might have a kid with that guy's sister. Like I remember coming home and having my sister-in-law crying, and I would walk in the house and make believe I didn't know why. "Why you crying?" "You know why—you shot my brother." It was crazy.

Back in those days, we always had a clubhouse. What used to happen was, we'd hang out at someone's apartment, but then they'd move out. So we'd take the apartment over. The landlord wasn't going to come and tell us we couldn't do it—we'd kick his fuckin' ass. After a while, if he called the police, then we would be angry at him. He couldn't show up to collect his rent. But it isn't like we were setting out to take over the building.

There was one place on South 9th where the landlord—he was a Hasidic—saw that as long as we were in the building, none of the tenants complained about the addicts burglarizing them or people shooting up in the hallways or on the roof or anything like that. So after a while, he would make an apartment available to us. With us in the building, there was security. He didn't have to worry about his building getting messed up, because we wouldn't allow that. So it

worked both ways. In September 1979 or '80, there was a big fire. I ran up and down the fire escape, taking a lot of the tenants out. So that kind of shit won over a lot of the tenants. You come running through the building with the cops after you and you could run into any door. It was a two-way thing. They didn't have to worry about getting robbed or nothing on the block. It's even like that now. Clubs may be doing their dirt, but the people on the block ain't bitching because they do good for the block. They help people out.

We never really had any problem with the Hasidics. Back in the early days, we used to have a habit of snatching their hats. We used to convert it to our style, with bandanas and patches and everything. The problem with that was, if you snatched one of their hats in the wrong neighborhood, you'd have a hell of a chase. If they caught you, you were going to get an ass whuppin'. They weren't pussies. Hell no. They yell one word in Yiddish, and everybody comes out the woodwork.

It was a handful of us that really made most of the noise. I turned out to be one of them, and it cost me a lot. I wound up doing like 13 years and change in jail. I got convicted for a gang-related manslaughter. I got arrested October 1980, came home December 1993.

It was two carloads of the fellas, just headed toward the block, coming from Greenpoint. Just passing through. We were at war with two clubs called the Dukes and the Arabian Knights. Someone happened to see two of the guys from the Arabian Knights so we pulled over. When everything was done, there was one of them dead from a gunshot and a knife wound. Me and another Unknown Biker were convicted for it. But I wasn't there, I just wound up getting accused of it. At that time I was doing a lot of harm to the Dukes, and the cops figured, let's get him off the streets.

When I did get arrested, my little brother—may he rest in peace—he was involved. They had me in the bullpen with him when the witnesses came. They looked at both of us, and I was a little relieved because I said to myself, well, they really was there, so I'm gonna walk. But they looked at us and they said, "It was Alicat" So it was Alicat. They gave my brother a summons, and I stood in jail for a decade and change. Even the cops told my mother one time they knew I didn't have nothing to do with it. They knew it was my kid brother, but all the witnesses were saying it was me. So that's how it happened. My kid brother ended up dying. He got killed a few years later. In fact, all three people who were involved in the murder ended up dying within three years of it. All of them met violent deaths.



Shirt by American Apparel

AMANDA—East Harlem, South Bronx

I was first in a gang when I lived in East Harlem. I joined the gang so I could go out with a guy. They weren't allowed to date outside girls. It had to be girls who were in that particular gang. I was 12 or 13. They became my brothers and sisters. Most of us came from broken homes, or parents that had two jobs or alcohol and drug problems. But there were some of us who had everything a kid could have. So there wasn't one particular reason.

From Spanish Harlem, we moved to the South Bronx. The Hunts Point area is the poorest place you can be. It doesn't get any worse than that. That was when the Bronx was burning. When I stepped off the train, I saw all these abandoned buildings, and every night there were the sirens of the fire trucks, and people being displaced, crying, no place to go. You lived in one building, and the buildings to your left and right were abandoned, because they were gutted out by fires. It looked like an epidemic had destroyed the place. And the drugs? Forget about it—everywhere you went, every corner, the drugs were there. You could find it in the grocery store if you wanted it bad enough. People were sniffing glue, so the bodegas began to sell glue because it was so popular. Prostitution was everywhere too. The apartments were filled with rats and roaches, we had no heat or hot water half the time, pipes were falling down, ceilings were leaking. This was our life. Who was I supposed to hang out with? It wasn't like the guy on the corner was a doctor, the one across the street was a lawyer. It was where I was going to end up, whether I wanted to or not.

When I was in Spanish Harlem, the guys in gangs wore silk jackets with their name on the front and the club name on the back. When I moved to the Bronx, I saw guys with long hair, cut sleeves, kneepads, and motorcycle boots. They didn't look like they bathed. I was like, "What the hell is this?" Then, slowly but surely, I started to gravitate towards them. Once again, I wanted to go out with someone who was in that gang. My mentality wasn't, "I have to join that gang." It was, "I like the guy, the guy likes me." Before you knew it, I married the president of the gang. I was with him for 24 years, so I was a real part of it. But here's the thing: I was never a member of that gang. I never wore colors. But I lived in the streets with them. I lived in abandoned buildings with them. I left my mother's house when I was 14. I'm 50 now,

and I haven't been back. My children's father—we had five children together—he and I slept in abandoned cars and buildings, what we called clubhouses. After a while, I realized that they—not just them, other clubs too—were being paid by the landlords to burn the buildings for the insurance. So it *was* an epidemic, but an economic type of epidemic.

I remember my first encounter with a drive-by. I was maybe 16. We were sitting on the corner of Longwood, drinking beer, and this particular club came by and started shooting. The bullets were just whizzing by my ear. So I ran down the block, and there's a restaurant there, still exists to this day, and I went into the restaurant because I knew the owner. I told him to open the garbage can, one of those big silver ones, and I went in there, and I told him to put everything on top of me and put the lid on. I stayed in there for what seemed like three hours, but it was probably 15 minutes.

I personally didn't believe in jumping people. I never jumped anybody. But there were girls where I had to kick their ass. Sometimes after I got done kicking her ass, one of my girlfriends would come and, you know, kick her ass some more. It could be that she had sex with one of the girls' guys, it could be that she was just wanting to have sex with one of the girls' guys, or she could have just been from another club.

I also had to fight some of the guys in the club. They didn't like me too much. I think that had a lot to do with the fact that I wasn't a member. I never wore "Property of." In the gang, the girls used to have to wear "Property of" on their jackets. I never believed in that, so I never did it. So I think a lot of it had to do with that. They thought I had control over their leader.

I carried guns for them if we had to go to a rumble or something because at the time the police wouldn't check the girls. In fact, sometimes the girls would rumble with other clubs without the guys knowing. I remember a particular time when a group of us girls had a rumble with a gang called the Seven Immortals. We rumbled with their guys, and that started a war between the clubs.

We were coming down Freeman Street to the club, and they started calling us out. They said, "You're not supposed to be on our block. You have to flip your colors." They started getting nasty. And a lot of these girls from these clubs, let me tell you, a lot of them could have been better fighters than Ali's

daughter. I mean, these girls could fight. They had a lotta heart. And they wouldn't flip colors. That means turn your jacket around or take it off. So the guys said, "If you don't do it, we're gonna strip you." And that's where the war began.

Stripping you means taking your jacket by force. And of course, you don't let nobody take your colors. In fact, you don't turn around for anybody either. If somebody says, "Oh, let me see your colors, turn around," it's not something you do. If you want to see somebody's colors, you walk around the back and look at them. Colors are more respected than your whole family. It's something you die for, like a flag. Today, that's what the gangs call it—the Bloods, the Crips, all of them, they call it flagging: "I die for my flag."

It was about territory. This is my hood. You don't fly your colors in my hood unless you're in one of my brother clubs. If you had war with somebody, then you could walk around their block wearing your colors, trying to be funny. You'd be saying, "I don't give a shit who you are," calling the club out.

Back then, I'd get up in the morning, 7:30 or so, go stand on the corner by the train station, and ask for quarters. I'd be there for a few hours. I could make up to \$20. With that money I'd buy wine and cigarettes. Then I'd go into this one restaurant, talk to the guy I knew there, find out if there was any food from breakfast left—99 percent of the time there was—and he'd pack it up and give it to me. The guys in the restaurants were cool with us, and in return, we took care of them. We made sure nobody messed with them. But it wasn't like they asked us to. It was the fact that they were so cool with us. We were like, "Nah, don't fuck with them."

So I'd go back to the club, feed myself, feed my man and whoever else was there. We'd drink wine—we're talking now maybe one o'clock in the afternoon. We'd eat, drink wine, hang out, bullshit, discuss what we were going to do that day, whether we were going to go visit another club or if there was going to be some kind of party. That was a typical day.

You have every type of person in every club. It's like a family, or the police department, or the priesthood. You have your murderers, your rapists, your thieves. You have it all. Who the hell knows what's in your brain? If you're in my club, I take you at face value.

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STOMPERS REUNION

A Roundtable Discussion—Looking Back On Anger

In June 2006, between 20 and 30 students from a technical college in Bangkok, Thailand, were gathered at a bar. A man who did not know these students made a disrespectful comment to one of them close to midnight, and his comment led to a physical confrontation that escalated very quickly, culminating in the man's death. Didn't that dead dick know these tech-school punks fucking rule Bangkok? Attacks like this are almost a weekly event. Three of the gentlemen involved in the altercation recently agreed to sit down and discuss the incident with two Vice correspondents over cocktails and dinner. All of the names have been changed at their request.

Bangkok Street Gangs 101

Alex: To start with, tell us how it works here. The system and stuff. The organization and leaders...

Deng: Well there's not really a leader. It's just the older guys in charge. At the technical college they initiate you into the gang when you're a first-year. It's like, "OK, go get all the auto mechanics. Round 'em up, then drop them off in front of such-and-such school." Then it's like, "Go make some people bleed or don't come back. There are five of you, so take five blades."

Alex: What are the blades like?

Deng: You know... cleavers, blunt heads, daggers, box cutters, machetes, whatever. Short knives. We had a gun stash too.

Alex: What do guns cost?

Deng: Back then, around \$200.

Ngam: But most of the time, we make them ourselves, because it's a tech school. This guy in the metal shop does this, that guy does

that—you make your own guns. Design them, make them.

Alex: So when did shit start to get real heavy for you, fight-wise?

Pravat: Well, there were these concerts. Like, each gang would roll 200 to 300 deep. My crew brought two buses.

Alex: Buses?

Pravat: At the time, bus fare was five baht per head. So 200 seats, that's already what, 1,000 baht? So we'd give them a couple hundred extra so they wouldn't have to make any stops.

Alex: So it's like a private bus. What sort of music did you play?

Pravat: There's no stereo on these buses, so we'd usually sing.

Deng: Yeah, you sing the school song, and then there are dis songs for other schools. It's like a football club. You cheer your team and trash the other team.

Alex: How do you know what school someone's from?

Deng: Every tech school has different shirts. So you just ride around town and if you see someone you stop and—

Alex: —bust out the clubs!

Pravat: Actually, no one uses clubs anymore, just knives and guns. We make bombs too. They're called ping-pong bombs and they've got glass in them. I know this one guy who got brain damage from making so many bombs.

Alex: From all the noise?

Pravat: Well, that and all the shrapnel he's taken in the face and head.

The Rules

John: Are the fights inevitable?

Pravat: Not really. It's more like you're out with your crew, and you end up looking to see if there's any other crew as big as yours.

John: If you outnumber them, but they have guns, do you still go?

Pravat: Yeah. But if you get shot, you're fucked. If somebody else gets shot, you have to avenge him.

Alex: You remember the guy's face and then go back and get him?

Pravat: Not really. It's more like that whole school shot your friend, so you have to take your revenge on the whole school. They



No one uses clubs anymore, just knives and guns. We make bombs too. They've got glass in them.

Giving Back

John: So the older gangsters are the ones who got you into banging. How do you give back to the community and teach the younger kids the tricks of the trade?

Pravat: The most important thing to instill in them is a sense of pride and respect. That's what it's all about. Initially, with young bloods, you kind of push them into shit. Everything we do is a sort of test to see how far you are willing to go for the crew. So the older guys send the younger guys to different schools to cause trouble. You have to push these kids into fights to see what they're made of. Sometimes you do it yourself. It's called jumping them in. You see how much they can take—how much blood they're willing to spill.

Alex: Are there guys who've graduated but still hang around and bang with the younger guys?

Pravat: Of course. You don't just leave it. Mostly because people won't let you. When there's a beef, you always get a phone call.

Deng: More than half of the gang population is older guys. Lots of them keep their school shirts even if they've been kicked out. And they'll wear them because they want people to step to them. A lot of them don't have jobs, so they're bored.

Pravat: Tech is like a religion. It's an establishment that you've got to respect. It's something sacred. You feel it when you're in.

Alex: What are some basic reasons to stomp a guy around here?

Pravat: I hate when a guy's hair is too spiked up. I'll fuck him up if

I see that. Or stupid shoes. I hate that too. Annoying pants. I can't stand any of that. It really bothers me in the worst way. It's a bother to the soles of my feet, like I just can't deal with it. Cross-eyed motherfuckers too. Hate them.

The Stomping

Alex: OK, let's talk about the most recent incident, where you all stomped a guy to death. That's why we're here.

Deng: We were at this one spot that's actually a real hot spot for tech-school students and gang violence. A lot of shit goes down there. It's got a bunch of small beer spots and outdoor food spots, like beer-garden-style, all piled in next to each other on both sides of this one street. "Gang row," it's called. We were at the dingiest of all the spots. It's the most fucked-up little rathole, but a popular spot nonetheless.

Pravat: The good thing is that it's on our turf. Whenever there's a big beef, like a real big beef, we usually gather up there first.

Alex: OK, but let's get back to the stomping.

Pravat: There were some older guys at the noodle shop across the street. They were all drunk and one of them started talking trash to my friend who was getting an order of noodle soup. The old guy told our friend that he was too young to be out. He said, "You should go home and suck your momma's titty." So our friend came back across the street and told us.

Alex: So these guys were tech students too?

Pravat: No, they were adults. They weren't even tech. They were old. And there were actually a ton of them. They were all wasted.

Alex: Were you scared?

Pravat: Not really. We just walked across the street. We didn't have any weapons, but I found a pipe in the back of a truck. We walked right in, my friend pointed the guy out, and we started bashing him. We could tell he wasn't scared. He fought back hard. Luckily, I hit his knee. That's when he fell down. My friend took the pipe from my hand and bashed the side of his head in, right around his ear. There were about eight of us around him. That's like the most you can get around a guy without overcrowding. The other guys wanted to get in on it, but there wasn't enough room. Most of the other adults were shocked once he hit the ground and started bleeding. They realized what was happening, and they couldn't do anything.

Alex: How long did you beat him for?

Pravat: It couldn't have been more than a couple minutes. I told my friend to toss the pipe, and we just kept beating him. Stomping his face, his nuts, his legs. It was real bad.

Deng: Honestly, he only died cause he fought back hard. I don't think we would have beaten him so badly if he hadn't acted so hard.

Pravat: I got real lucky the day the cops nabbed everyone. These guys weren't there. I was at that same place across the street. I happened to be in the bathroom. When I walked out, there were about 15 cops circling our table, arresting people. I slipped right passed them and walked out. My friend with the pipe got 20 years.

Alex: So how many of your crew got arrested that day?

Pravat: About 10 or 12. I think the people from the noodle shop fingered my crew. They're all in prison now, with different sentences. Some got 10 years, some got 15. My friend with the pipe got the most. One guy actually got away somehow. I'm not sure how. He's on the run and no one's heard from him since.

At this point, the stompers adjourned to the snooker table and then resumed their discussion later that evening. Please visit viceland.com to read the rest. It goes on for hours.

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IN THE NAME OF MAO

India Picks Up the Slaughter

If you're going just by natural resources, Chhattisgarh is India's richest state. Hardwoods like teak and saal come from here, and there are huge supplies of steel, bauxite, diamonds, and gold. In spite of all that however, Chhattisgarh is jam-packed with Indian hillbillies (Indians call them "backwards").

There are some 30 tribes in Chhattisgarh, and they all have different languages and levels of socioeconomic development ranging from Paleolithic hunter-gatherers to factory workers. What unites them is poverty and isolation. In Chhattisgarh, a common cure for financial trouble is to murder your family and then commit suicide. A common thing for young girls to do here is get raped by a forest officer. A local cure for hemorrhoids is to cut out your sphincter. A cure for being born with extra teeth is to marry a dog. People have names like Michael Jackson and are dead by 40.

The reason things in Chhattisgarh have remained so fucked despite

60 years of official concern for the backward population is basically this: Money allocated for development of tribal areas gets wheeled away by corrupt officials at every level of India's bureaucracy. It doesn't reach the poor, and the poor get upset, and that's where Naxalism comes in.

Naxalism is a revolutionary movement that exists in 11 of India's 26 states. Its leaders follow a Maoist strategy of protracted armed struggle. That means they want to give guns to poor people, form a national peasant army, and overthrow the existing government. It was born in 1967, in the Naxalbari region of Bengal, with an uprising among some tea farmers. While this revolt is often called spontaneous, it was actually carefully orchestrated by communists. The Naxalites, in practice, are heavily-armed jungle nomads who wear camouflage uniforms, extort "party donations" from peasants, raid police stations for weapons, blow up bridges, and behead "police

informers." They travel in squads of 12 to 30 members, establish local governing bodies called *Jan Adalats* that mete out justice in the form of corporal punishment, and, as a cursory nod to their roots, teach peasants basic farming techniques such as building reservoirs and planting seeds. But the Naxalites' main business today is their war with the local police.

No one knows what is going on, who is winning, or how to keep score. The Indian police have armed peasants with ax handles and cooking knives and often send them into remote areas to perform surveillance and checking. They call these guys the *Salwar Judam*—Peace March—but they should be called the Where'd My Arms Go? March because most of these stool peasants are hacked to bits.

In early June of this year, the Central Reserve Police Force and the Naxalite revolutionaries had a gun battle in the Dornapal region of Chhattisgarh. This happens almost daily there, but this time the police took three prisoners who said they were high-ranking, hardcore Naxalites. The CRPF commanding officer, Ashok Bali, said that when the Naxalites were arrested, they were heavily armed and in full uniform. He considered this a pretty big deal so I went to go check it out.

The prisoners were in a hospital in the city of Jagdalpur. It was a two-story building without any sort of reception area. You opened the doors and you were in it: Nurses, doctors, and the awful stink of sickness. The two male Naxalite prisoners were upstairs in a ward of 20 bedridden men. It was even worse up there: Bloody sheets, delirious patients, and broken legs in grimy, brown splints. The two prisoners' beds were adjacent, guarded by armed and uniformed CRPF men, and the wall behind them was exposed to the sun. There was no AC or fans, so it was almost unbearably hot.

The first Naxalite looked about 19. He was compact and muscled, shirtless, with a plaid scarf tied around his waist like a loincloth. He had thick black hair, acne-scared cheeks, and a four-inch bandage on his upper arm. Speaking through two translators—from English to Hindi to Gondi—he said he was 28 and his name was Miriam Nonga.

He said, "I am an only child raised by my mother in Toya Gura. My father died when I was six years old. I had uncles but they lived in different villages. My mother and I supported ourselves by farming. We owned five acres of land and my mother cultivated it with my assistance. Also we would collect forest produce to sell at the market."

Did you have many friends as a kid?

"I had one friend growing up, named Marom Joga. I last saw him about three months ago. He had surrendered from the Naxalites and joined the police. I visited him at a relief camp. About a month later, he was murdered. A man named Satam, who belongs to the Ponan Pali squad of the Naxalites, killed him. I was not a witness but I heard this from other villagers."

Didn't that make you want to leave the party?

"I was angry, but I was helpless to do anything."

Why did you join the Naxalites in the first place?

"The Naxalites said they would give me land and money. They said, 'You are a poor boy.'"

What's life like with the Naxalites?

"While I was with the Naxalites, I lived a routine life. I was married a year ago, and I now have a baby son. I lived a routine life in my village most of the time, until my leader summoned us to some duty, then we would go. I never had a uniform or a gun. I had only a bow and arrow. I had clothes like this." He pointed to the translator's shirt and pants.

Then why did the police shoot you?

"They fired on us without thinking who was Naxalite and who was not."

The commanding officer denied this, saying, "They are trained to lie. Even if you are beating them, you will not get the truth."

Om Prakesh Rhator is the director general of the police in Chhattisgarh. His office is in Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh. It is an L-shaped city that feels impossible to navigate, and getting to his fortress of an office proves it. After an hour or so of well-tended gardens that manifest out of nowhere and are then replaced by another

jumble of half-constructed, fully-inhabited houses surrounded by runnels of slime I arrived, went through a million security checks, and sat down. "The tribals once enjoyed absolute freedom," he said from his massive desk. "Good music, good wine, good life, forest produce... all in all, they were a happy lot. They had limited needs, and all of them were provided for by the abundant forests. However, when Kondapali Sitamma, a professor from Andhra Pradesh, got it into his head to come in with his outdated, impractical philosophy, he and his so-called cadres very easily intoxicated these gullible people and fooled them by bewitching their minds with the dialectics of Marx. Then these so-called Naxalites took the gullible boys, put guns into their hands, and told them, 'You go into the next village and you kill. You kill the have-nots.'"

Why do you call them so-called Naxalites?

"Because the real Naxalite movement began in the 70s, in the Naxalbari region of Bengal." He gave the history, which was boring. "We put it down. Then there was a second wave in the 80s, and now this is their third attempt, and this one we will put down as well."

Why would the Naxalites tell new recruits to kill innocent people? "To incite terror. And through terror, to collect P.C.—*Party Chanda*. It means donations. It is extortion. Also, to isolate the boy from his village, to make him a fugitive from the law. I have seen it again and again. Recently they kidnapped a group of villagers and did horrible things to them, tied their hands, made them drink their own urine. They killed some of them."

Is it possible to meet those who survived the recent kidnappings?

"They are back at their villages."

Do you have their names?

"Write that down and Santosh can find the information for you later."

The prisoners were in a hospital in the city of Jagdalpur. It was a two-story building without any sort of reception area. You opened the doors and you were in it: Nurses, doctors, and an awful stink of sickness.

Santosh rustled some papers. When Rhator turned to him, Santosh whispered that the Naxalites had, according to police statistics, killed 214 innocent people in the last year.

"Two hundred and fourteen. They are guilty of robberies, looting, rape. They force village women to join and tell them they can no longer have children. We confiscated from them a store of items, including musical instruments they would play and force women to dance. We also found thousands of condoms. Local doctors attested to the fact that they had done many forced abortions on these women. They plant land mines without keeping maps of their locations. Even demons are ashamed of such actions."

I asked him about Gadar, a man I had a meeting set up with who was considered the voice of the Naxalite movement. "These people do not believe in their own ideology," he said. "If you get them privately, they will admit that there is no hope of their movement ever succeeding. I even have this admission from Gadar, the so-called author of revolutionary poems."

Gadar is a loud and impassioned, long-winded man. When I met him he immediately began trotting out the history of the movement, beginning with that uprising in Bengal, and then came to the communist rhetoric. After a few minutes I got a word in: "It's too dense. What is the basic Maoist ideology? Tell me it like I'm a five-year-old kid."

He said, "The problem is the uneven economic development of this country. The entire political-social-cultural economics and the sovereignty of this country have gone into hands of the World Bank through American imperialism. You see, the philosophy of imperialism is the market. Its God is profit, and its method is cheap labor. To achieve this they have taken triangular attack: Cultural inundation!



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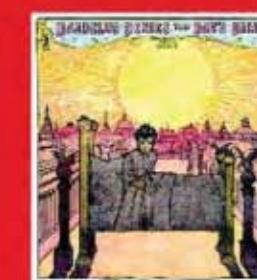
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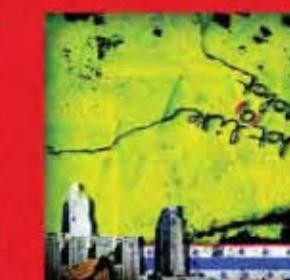
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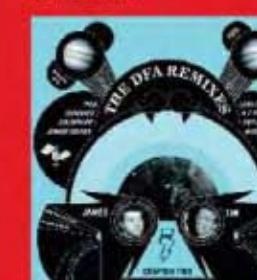
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OK. But what are Naxalites doing in the forests?

“Land to the tiller has not been solved. Health education and basic needs of people have not been fulfilled. America is a police state—dependant only on the army. They produce bombs. They only produce the weapons.”

He said a lot more stuff like that, and as happens with Maoists, you start to zone out. Then he started to enthuse about our upcoming joint entrance into the jungles of Dantewada. He reached a fever pitch of Mao rhetoric and I stopped taking notes. At the end I had to say something else, so I just muttered, “So you want a democracy without capitalism?”

He said, “If we were together at this moment, I would recite an impromptu poem out of joy.” I still don’t know what the fuck he was talking about.

The next few days were spent talking to everyone even remotely linked to the Naxalites. I was told they were rapists. I was told it was a lie and it was the police who raped. I was told that the police force you to help them and then the Naxalites punish you severely for doing so, and vice versa. Eventually I found myself at a Naxalite camp. When I met the commander there he was very skeptical of my intentions.

He asked me who else I’d talked to at that point, and I rattled off the list: “G.P. Singh, John Lankumar, O.P. Rhator, Ramesh Nayyar, the home minister, Dr. Ajai Sahni of the Southeast Asian terrorism watch group, the Naxalites’ lawyer and representative in the 2004 peace talks, the director general of jails, Gadar, countless journalists, a wedding of anti-Naxalite bandits in Bihar, K.P.S. Gill, Mr. Narayan of the—”

“What did K.P.S. Gill say?” He had sat up. He cocked his head.

“He said Naxalites are murderers. He said they cut off the hands of policemen, they kill poor people, they are nothing but bandits. He spoke generally. He thinks the movement is doomed to fail because it is founded on an illogical premise.”

There is not a good word for what he had in his eyes. Whatever it was, it was more than smart or educated or certain—it was resolve so

heavy he did not in any way need to make it apparent. I was like a schoolgirl swooning. (Later I found out what the mysterious quality in his eyes was: He was in mourning for his leader and closest friend, who had been murdered several days before.)

He took my number and said he would call. I asked if there wasn’t any way we could speak for 15 minutes now. There wasn’t. His call didn’t come. And five days later, the Naxalites in his district killed seven tribals—slicing open their stomachs and slitting their throats—and kidnapped twenty-five.

That was the closest I came to understanding. There were more jungle meetings—there were more stories—there was endless shit. There was a day of strange sleep on a string bed in the hut of two tribals before I was pedaled by a 13-year-old over half a mile of dirt road to a spot 15 feet from a Naxalite squad, only to be sent back. And there was, finally, a meeting with one of the seven members of the Coordinating Committee. Arranged by a senior journalist in

I was told they were rapists. I was told it was a lie and it was the police who raped. I was told that the police force you to help them and then the Naxalites punish you severely for doing so.

India, it took place in a home in the city of Ranchi. Approaching the home, having waited eight days, led by the boy through crowded back alleys, I felt like I was about to meet Colonel Kurtz. But it was just a Naxalite boy of 29. He was soft and smooth-skinned. He was full of smiles. After listening to his programmed talk about the down-trodden for one half of our allotted hour, I interrupted. I said, “Yes, but tell me, what do the Naxalites actually do?” It took some time to make my question clear to the translator, but when he grasped it, he turned to the commander, Sagar, and put it to him. Sagar’s eyes lit up. He spoke with animation and enthusiasm for close to ten minutes, punctuating his thoughts with gestures, speaking in a lively tone and with an engaged alternation in pitch. And then the translator turned to me, and he began: “In 1967, in the region of Naxalbari, there was a spontaneous uprising...”

ANGELA CORNING

The album cover features five band members standing in a row against a dark, textured background. The text 'escape the fate' is written in a large, white, cursive font above 'DYING IS YOUR LATEST FASHION' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. Below the title is a quote from Ronnie Radke: "I'm giving out my real phone number so I can tell you about our new record. Seriously, call me! 213-219-7793". A small photo of a person with red lips is at the bottom, and the Epitaph logo is in the bottom right corner.

AVAILABLE NOW

The album cover has a purple and black background with a silhouette of a person's head and shoulders. The title 'I Am Ghost' is written in a large, white, serif font, with 'LOVERS' REQUIEM' in a smaller font below it. A small photo of a person with red lips is in the bottom left corner, and the Epitaph logo is in the bottom right corner.

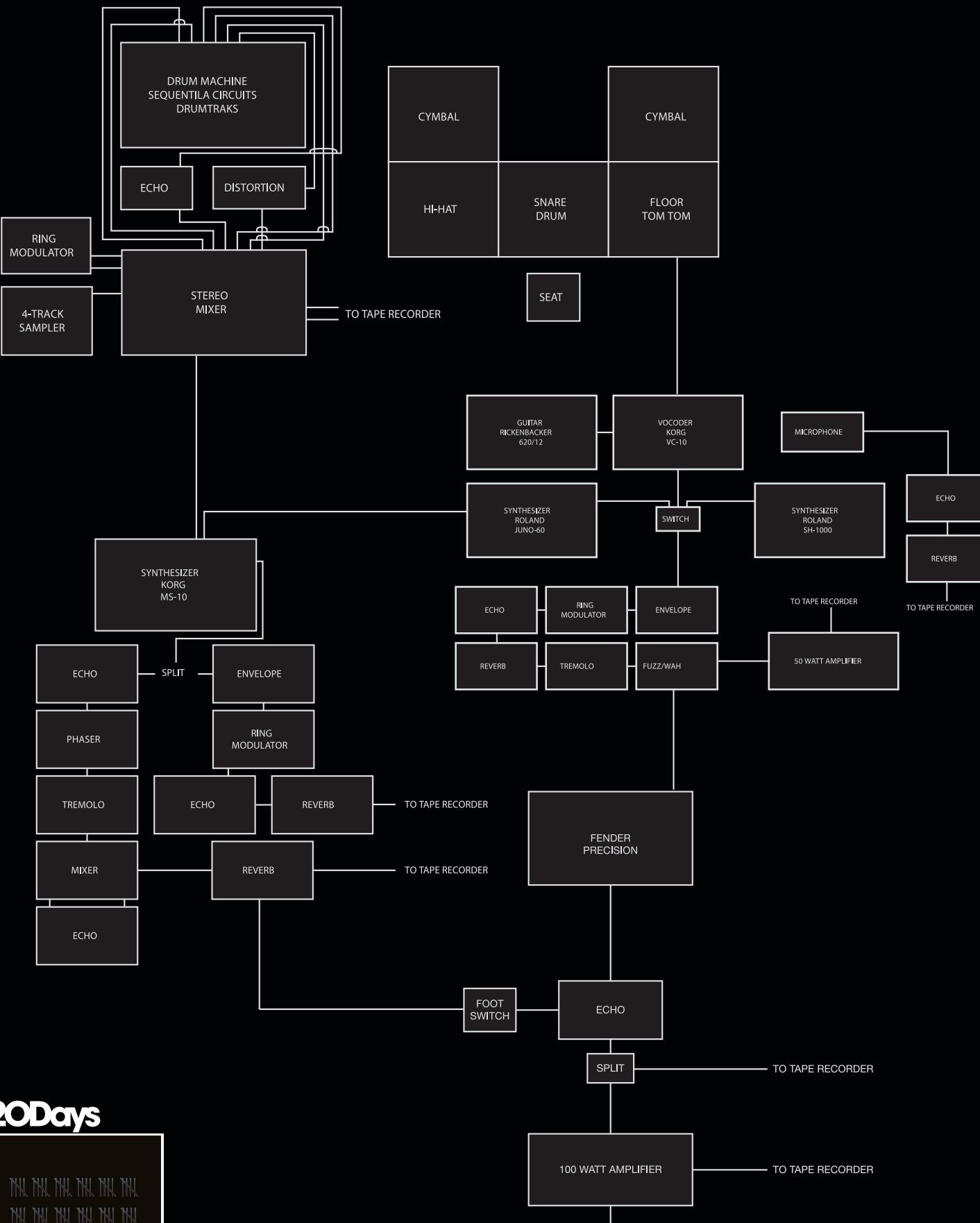
LOVERS' REQUIEM - I Am Ghost's first full length album melds post-hardcore, punk, metal, and swirls with symphonic accompaniment in a gothic tour de force of epic proportions.

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FILIPINO GANGS

TEXT AND PICTURES BY KEISUKE NAGOSHI

The Sputnik gang is the biggest in the Philippines. It's so enormous that it's difficult to keep track of all the smaller, weaker branches at the bottom of its hierarchy. The lowest rungs are more like local vigilantes watching over the neighborhood while their wives and sons cheer them on.

I became chummy with a particular subgroup recently. The slum I was in at the time is called Tondo. It's in Manila, and it's really bad. It's surrounded by a moat, and you can tell from the people's faces that it is tough living there. The gangs here sell really shoddy drugs for a living—mostly bad marijuana, bad *shabu* (heroin—for some reason they use the Japanese slang), and bad glue. The kids all carry the glue around in plastic bags and start sniffing at around noon every day. They also sell joints for 100 Japanese yen a piece (that's about 85 cents). The weed tastes awful.

The people in Tondo eat a lot of rice and chicken. They also feed me dog, even though it's illegal.

The divide between the rich and poor in Manila has gotten worse since the new president came into power. That said though, Tondo is apparently doing a lot better these days. In the 1960s and 70s it was a completely lawless area with dead bodies strewn everywhere. With the gangs, it's not really about "joining" or "not joining," because it all runs in the family. Local gangs are usually run by one big family, so the kids grow up in that kind of environment and it's only natural for them to become a member too. Everyone is related to each other and inbreeding seems to be pretty damn common.





Gang members in their prison cell.

the hidden cameras Awoo.

IN STORES SEPTEMBER 19

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- Nov 21 Houston, TX. Mink.
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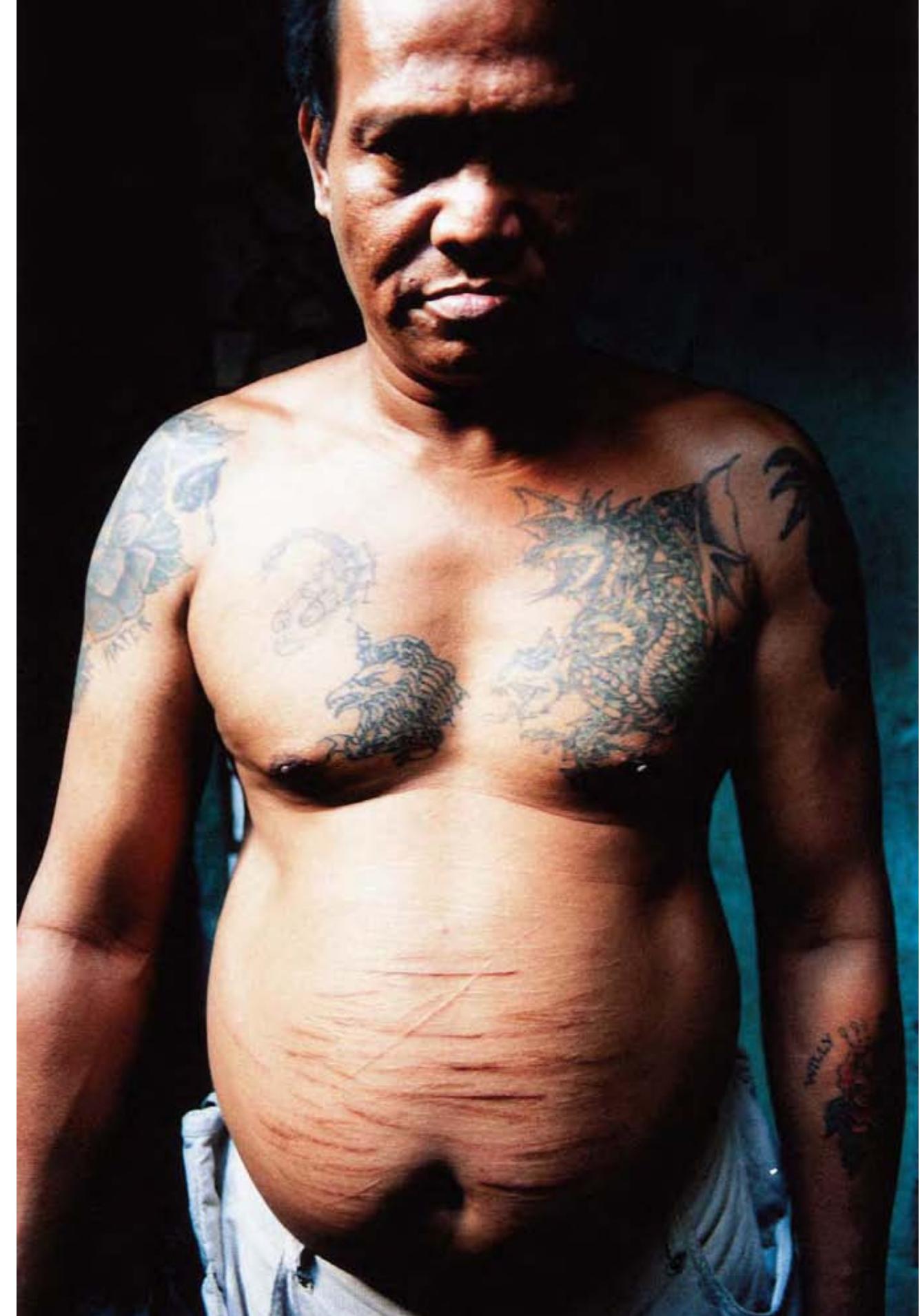
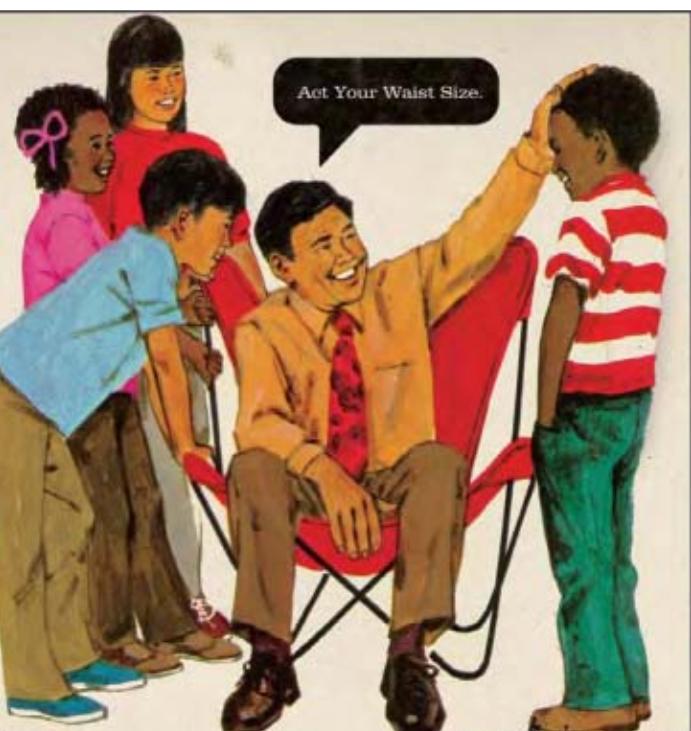
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The machete scars on his stomach are from gang fights.

AMERICAN AGHORI

An Introduction to Kapal Nath

TEXT AND PICTURES BY MICHAEL YON



Gary Stevenson, aka Kapal Nath, drinks from a human skull and is quick with a knife. He was once arrested in Varanasi, India while trying to kill a man. Stevenson told me that he shot and killed a man in San Francisco. (Authorities refused to investigate the claim, though I was able to confirm the purchase of the pistol he said he used.)

The fundamentals of Aghor—perhaps the most extreme religion in the world—are fantastically simple, though nonetheless repugnant to most. Repugnance, or rather the quest to overcome it, is in fact a central tenet of this belief system. Aghor is an extreme sect of Hinduism. Its adherents principally worship Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction. Aghoris live by a simple creed: 1. The gods are perfect. 2. The gods create everything: Every thought, every action, every bird and diamond, every birth and every death. 3. Since the gods are perfect, and everything is made by the gods, everything—*everything*—is perfect.



Gary Stevenson, a descendent of Robert Lewis Stevenson (author of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Treasure Island*), legally changed his name to Giridas Rama Sitanatha in Honolulu. (He kept his old initials.) I traveled twice to Hawaii to research his life there, and found the legal document for his name change. His address was listed as a local Hare Krishna ashram.

Since everything is perfect, being repulsed by anything or forbidding any behavior as taboo is tantamount to rejecting the gods. While this accounts for the willingness of more moderate Aghoris to work with lepers and other so-called untouchables, it also explains why some ardent Aghoris aim to overcome some of the more gruesome targets of revulsion. In my travels I've met Aghoris who would just as soon pluck an eyeball from a rotten human corpse and pop it into their mouths as eat chicken. He or she might carry a rotting dead dog over their shoulder for a week, or have sex with a dead cow (holy to other Hindus) or with a rotting

CONTINUED ON PG. 114



HEAVENS PATENTENDING

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Stevenson has extreme charisma for some. A beautiful French author once spent three days and nights with him in a cremation ground. In this photo, Stevenson chats up Italian travelers in Thailand.

human corpse. One Aghori in northern India ate part of the rotting penis of a bloated, vivisected corpse on the banks of the Ganges, engaging in this "sacred ritual" in full view of onlooking police. I've got pictures.

Aghor has murky roots. It most likely originated in India, which continues to be the sacred center for Aghor adherents worldwide, although that country has outlawed some of the more extreme rituals followers have engaged in, like human sacrifice. A good deal of Aghoris do, however, still practice human sacrifice. In India, some Aghoris are found in and around the cremation grounds in Varanasi. But there are Aghoris in America, Germany, Italy, Russia, and Australia. In fact, once I learned that Westerners were among the devout, I traveled around the world six times researching this strange belief system. I lived with Aghoris in their ashram in Sonoma, California, and visited with a sect in Mezzago, Italy.



I managed to get hold of his passport and make a detailed spreadsheet of his travels from the stamps and visas. Stevenson lived in California, Hawaii, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, and Nepal.

The most severe Aghori I came across was born in Texas. A typical American kid from a typical if affluent family, Gary Stevenson's life first veered off the normal path when he was stricken with polio as a child. A troubled

youth and rebellious adolescence coincided with the Age of Aquarius and Gary set off on a spiritual path that took him to San Francisco, Hawaii, and finally into India and Nepal in an ever-deeper slide into the extreme. Along the way he shed his identity, legally changing his name to Giridas Rama Sitanatha as he sought a magical path to immortality and enlightenment. Eventually, he turned to Aghor and its dark tantric rites. As he studied and excelled at his new religion, his guru christened him "Kapal Nath," and he became lost in a lifestyle of grave robbing and cannibalizing the bodies to consume the *Shakti* (life energy) of the dead. Today, Gary Stevenson is a free man—completely free as an Aghori.

MICHAEL YON

Michael Yon is working on a documentary about Gary Stevenson with Principle Pictures. It's called *American Cannibal*. Check out www.michaelyon-online.com.



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— Pitchfork

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Photos by the author

This was a Crips- and Bloods-themed party I went to years ago. Since I lived in a Crip neighborhood, I had to make my visiting buddy carry his Blood costume out of my house in a bag and change into it 30 blocks away.

I WAS A CRIP... SORT OF

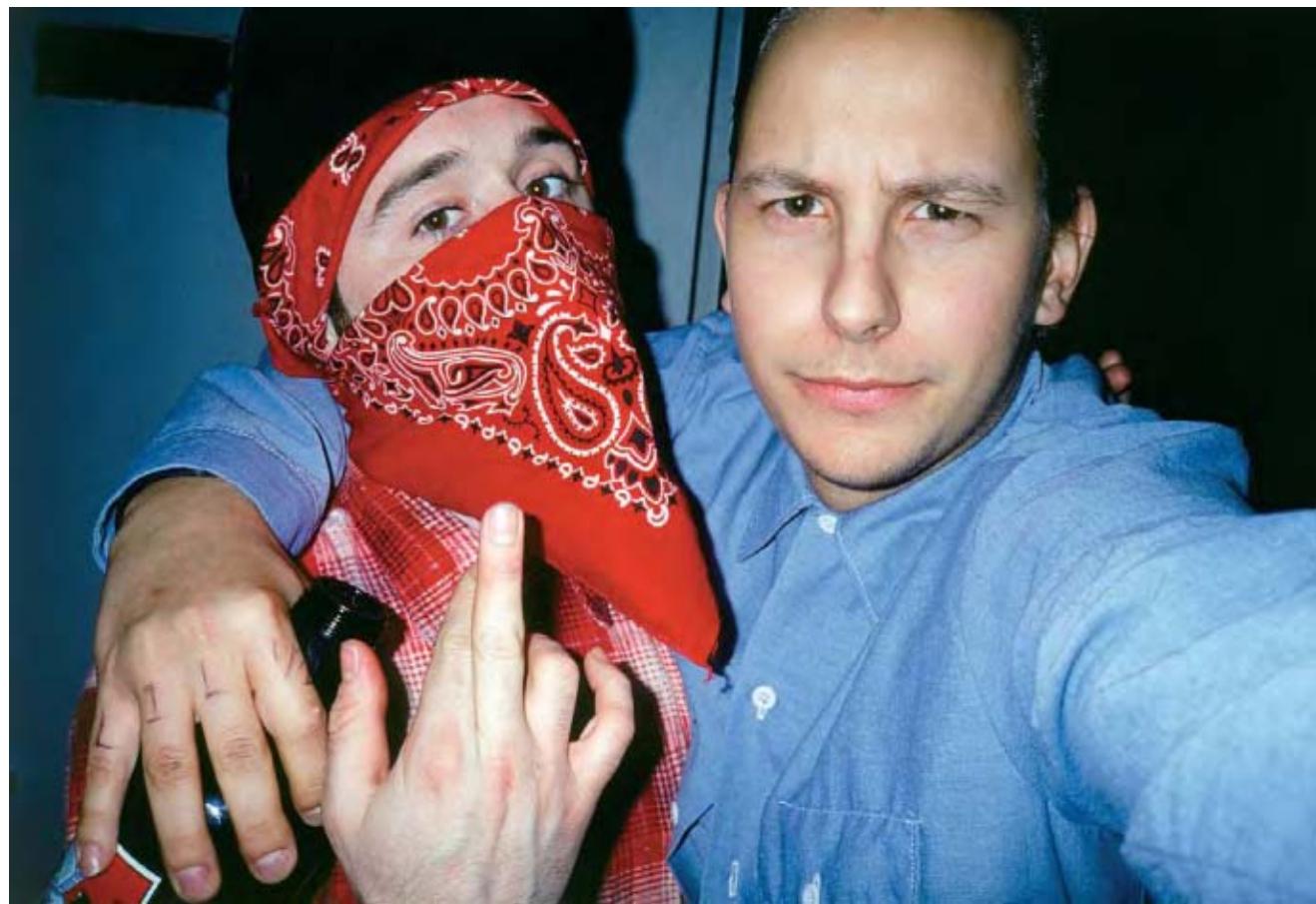
I can't be entirely certain but I'm pretty sure I was a member of the blue-wearing gang, the Crips, from 2001 to 2002. I was on a lot of drugs then and have a piss poor recollection of all things, but I got a good feeling I was in the gang. At the very least I was an honorary member. A pseudo-Crip, if you will.

I moved to the same part of LA where they filmed *Boyz in Da Hood*—it's around 35th and Crenshaw. (I heard the Singletons were too scared to go into Compton, which is why they chose to shoot in my slightly mellower hood.) Me and my two roommates were the only specks of salt in the peppershaker for a good 30 blocks. I loved it. It reminded me of Brooklyn and was a welcome change after living in Hollywood's "boys town" for a year and constantly second-guessing who was a female and who was a tranny. My roommates hated it. They were shit-scared. One was a hippie and one was a junkie from Nebraska. I think it might have been their first time seeing black people. I was just happy to be paying \$400 a month rent. I didn't care where I was living.

I'll admit it though, the first day was a bit intense. As us three white boys unpacked and moved our things in, you would have thought we were ass-raping a newborn baby with a baseball bat by the looks on everyone's faces. It seemed as if all the neighbors' eyes conveyed the same two emotions: Shock and disgust. My roommates kept muttering under their breath, "They're gonna lynch us," and "Fuck, fuck, fuck. We're dead."

That's when a few gentlemen dressed in matching blue Dickies, blue flannels, and blue bandanas on their heads walked over to me as I went to pull a bottom-heavy box of CDs out of the back of my candy-

apple red 1972 El Camino. I turned to them and thought, "God. These guys need to call each other in the morning and plan out their outfits a little better." One of them, the small, sad one (I call him that because he had a tattoo of a teardrop under each eye) said, "Yo. What's up with the car?" "It's not for sale," I said. People were always asking to buy my car. His face didn't change. I think I misunderstood the question. "Oh. Do you want to know what kind of engine it has?" "Nah," he said. "Why the fuck is it RED?" "Um, I don't know. That's what color it is. What do you mean?" Then I noticed, mostly because he pointed to it, that he had a gun in his waistband. "Oh!" I said. "Is this some kind of gang thing? OK, I understand. Well, neither me nor my car belong to the RED gang, if that's what you're asking. It's just a RED car." The tall, muscle-bound one said something profound to the effect of, "Yeah? Well, it better be." OK. Whatever. I grabbed my CDs and walked away. I could see my roommates peeking through the curtains. When I got inside they told me we needed to move, that they were afraid for their lives. I told them that I would go make peace. So I changed into a pair of my old BLUE Dickies, grabbed a 12-pack of beer and what cigarettes I had left, and set them on my front steps. Then I went back in, took my shirt off (a nauseating sight if ever there was one), put on my leather shoulder holster (an impulse purchase after getting high and spacing out on *Miami Vice* reruns for 12 hours), put my 9 mm Beretta in the holster, loaded up my .357 Smith & Wesson, stuck it in my belt, and went back outside. I sat on the steps and proceeded to drink all the beer and smoke all the smokes while staring out into the street at no one in particular. Before long the neighbors started to come over and welcome me. Some even told me bluntly, "You some crazy-ass white boys." Funny how brandishing a firearm in certain communities is a bonding experience.



Me (right) and a friend, pretending to be blue- and red-gang guys.

A week later I saw some neighborhood kids riding on what could be described as skateboards, but they were so beat up it's kind of insulting to the word skateboard—nose and tails worn to shit, wheels flat-spotted, bearings rusted through. I called them over and introduced myself. I went in my car and pulled out some used decks and wheels I had and gave them to the kids. They used some slang at me to let me know I was awesome.

The next day the sad gangbanger came marching down the street in my direction. I said, "What's up?" meaning "Hello, how are you?"—not to be confused with "Sup?" meaning "Do you have a problem? If so we can kill each other with guns." "You give my brother a skateboard yesterday?" "Yes." "I don't want you giving him no more skateboards." I thought he was going to punch me in the face. I thought it was a matter of pride. My partner Steve is a schoolteacher in Jersey City and he once gave a student who had no socks a 12-pack of tube socks. The next day the kid's dad met him in the parking lot, threw the socks at him, punched him, and said, "We don't need your pity." Before I could say anything he told me if I was going to give the kid anything else that I needed to make him work for it, to teach him responsibility and that nothing is free. He suggested I have him clean my house or wash my car. So for the next year I had free maid service in exchange for skating products. It was quite a trade-off.

I remember some kids in Hollywood thought it would be funny to throw a "Bloods and Crips" dress-up party. My buddy Chris was visiting from Jersey and was so excited about the idea that he dressed completely in red and nearly ran out my house like that. I had to tackle him and make him take off his outfit before he got shot. I put my blues and his reds in a plastic bag and we drove 30 blocks north to a Ralph's parking lot on Le Brea, in a Jewish neighborhood where

I felt safe enough for us to change into our "gang outfits." All night at the party, kids came up to me in their ill-fitting chinos and incorrectly folded bandannas asking me for advice and "What's it like in the hood?" As I tried to explain the proper way to fold a gang handkerchief and how it's a total fashion faux pas to wear two different colors, I kind of felt like the Dalai Lama of the white gang scene. And I'll admit, it felt kind of good.

A week before I moved out da hood, I got a flyer under my door saying they were opening up a new chicken stand around the corner from my house, directly across the street from the existing chicken stand. It was laundry day and I had no more black t-shirts left and was forced to wear my red comedy straightedge shirt, which had a bunch of Xs on the front and something written on the back like "Drugs are for losers," or "Drinking sucks," or some shit. I walked out of my house, laundry in hand, and stopped dead in my tracks. It was like a goddamn blue-gang meeting in my front yard. Everyone seemed really pissed, like lions that hadn't eaten in weeks. Somehow they smelled me wearing a red shirt and ran over. "What's the matter with youse guys?" I asked. "What's up with the RED shirt?" one of them asked. I laughed. "Come on already," I said. "I've been living here a year. Do you think I would go and join a rival gang behind your back? If I was going to join a gang I'd join your gang. You guys seem like you have a good thing going." Then I explained to them what straightedge was and why my shirt was so funny and we all had a good chuckle. That night as I skated to the liquor store I smelt fire. I followed my nose and saw the old chicken stand burning to the ground. I could hear someone screaming inside. The next morning the paper said they'd killed a chicken man that night. I've never been back there since.

CHRIS NIERATKO

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BEST ALBUM OF THE MONTH: DEAD MOON

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RAP



J DILLA
The Shining
BBE

Signature dirty drums, spacey samples, and lush analog synths run though this beautiful posthumous release by the greatest producer that ever did it. All the while Madlib, Black Thought, Common, and Pharoahe Monch eloquently complement Dilla's last words.
BLAQUE PAK



JR WRITER
History in
the Making
Diplomats/Koch

Look, Vice loves Dipset and Dipset loves Vice, but unfortunately, we can't really pay close attention to this album at the moment because Jim Jones's got us all... baaaalliiin'!
YOUNG NIZZLE



RICK ROSS
Port of Miami
Def Jam

As much as we've hyped the big homie Ross, this album ain't really all that. We thought dude was going to pull a 2006 Jeezy. Instead, he came in a bit generic, yo. We're talking hit-

or-miss rhymes and bland production. And although you may find a cool Runners beat here ("Where My Money") and a retarded Lil Wayne hook there ("I'm a G"), nothing on the record is nearly as grandiose as Ricky's breakout hit "Hustlin." Ah well.
BUSTA NUT

rare instances where hyperintelligent rap works. Shit, it's been out for a couple of months now and everybody's still sleeping. Just disregard the first single and listen to the whole record, through and through, on headphones. You'll see—sometimes it feels kind of good to be wrong.
MACHO

called them "anxiety pears." I think Soulwax should write a song called "Anxiety Pears." I also think Soulwax is a great band. The Europeans are already all over this shit. But if you're not European, let me tell you that Soulwax is like an old-school, Daft Punk-style techno/rock combo that you'd be psyched on if you heard it in a club and were sweaty and on drugs and just wanted to fuckin dance, man. And I'm not just saying that cuz I ate all their cereal.
KELLY AMNER

There's some interesting things on here but overall, it doesn't really work. I never thought I'd say this, and maybe it has something to do with the Fred Durst goatee, but DJ Shadow is so 90s.
SMUTTY RUFF

THE ROOTS
Game Theory
Def Jam

Man, I was really looking forward to shitting on Questlove yet again on this one. In the past, for the enjoyment of you and yours, I haven't shied away from calling this self-righteous, politically correct, walking, talking blog the worst thing that ever happened to black music, namely because he does way too much of the one thing rap musicians should never do: Think. And when I heard the dreadful single "Don't Feel Right," I said to myself: "There he goes again, ruining yet another Roots album." Boy was I way off. *Game Theory* is actually the best Roots album since *Things Fall Apart* (if not *Philadelphia*) and believe it or not (I know you don't), a sure contender for record of the year. Dark, obtuse, and overproduced in all the right ways, this is one of the

ELECTRONIC

DJ SHADOW
The Outsider
Geffen

SQUAREPUSHER
Hello
Everything
Warp

WHITEY
The Light at
the End of the
Tunnel Is a Train
Dim Mak

How about an interest in jazz for closing off any exciting direction electronica might have gone in. This feels like being put on hold in the not-too-distant future.
TIM HANKERS

SOULWAX
Nite Versions
Modular

I went to Ghent, Belgium, and crashed in David from Soulwax's house. Holy shit does he have an amazing DVD collection. I barely went outside cuz I just wanted to watch TV the whole time. But when I did go outside, there were little Soulwax logos stenciled on the sidewalks all over town. They're like THE band in Ghent. (They're also the super-famous club group 2 Many DJs—you know, the guys who basically created the whole mashup craze of the early 00s.) The other greatest thing in Ghent aside from Soulwax is a 12th-century castle smack dab in the middle of the city with a torture museum inside it. Did you know they had ball gags all the way back in the Middle Ages? They

HARD STUFF

DEAD MOON
Echoes of
the Past
Sub Pop

Dead Moon are the survivalists of rock. They press their own records, used to put everything out on their own label, and even built their own house. They've had at least two documentaries made about them so far and they're also grandparents. The drummer keeps an upside-down bottle of Jack Daniels attached to his drum kit

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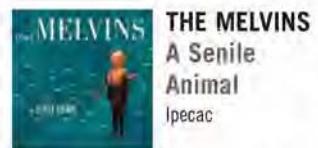
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WORST ALBUM OF THE MONTH: SEAN LENNON

with a melty candle burning on it while he plays and then he pours beer on his drums and drops go flying up everywhere and his hair is all wet and it looks awesome. If you took every band in the world and fit them all on the head of a pin and then multiplied that pin by a billion, you might begin to approach the level of rockingness this band has achieved. They should be on a fucking stamp. SMOKE-AHONTAS



Amy: Hey Lesley, do you think only boys really like the Melvins?
Lesley: I dunno, I like *Houdini*.
Amy: Yeah, but they have like 50 more albums.
Lesley: Oh. Then yeah.
AMY AND LESLEY



I love Bob Seger. "Night Moves"? "Hollywood Nights"? "We've Got Tonight"??? Could dude even write a bad song? Well, OK, "Old Time Rock & Roll" is up there in the top ten most annoying rock songs ever written (in a snuggle sandwich between "Johnny B. Goode" and "Born to Be Wild"), and yeah, Chevy ruined "Like a Rock" forever, but other than that, THIS is music the way it should be:

Gravelly-voiced, coked-up, American heartland rock jams and karaoke-gold power ballads. I even like "Katmandu" ever since they used it in *Freaks and Geeks*, in the episode where the boys go

to that make-out party and Bill ends up making out with the snobby cheerleader in the closet. I cried when that happened.
MEG SNEED



Whoa, this is some fucking catchy, gravelly-voiced heartland rock! Seriously, did they travel into the future and read my Bob Seger review before making this album or something? A gruff-looking, long-haired fellow with a big set of pipes and a beard to match? Yes, please. If I played the first three songs on this album for you and told you it was some obscure 70s AM Gold stuff, you'd totally lie and be all, "Oh, of course, Catfish Haven, I've been into their shit forever." I'm so happy someone's still making music like this. This band rules.
MEG SNEED



Oh, it seems that we have some sci-fi-focused prog-rock here. Why don't you just tour junior-high science fairs and win the triple crown of nerddom?
COOL KID



The only good thing about trendy noise-rock bands is they always have funny/cool song names. Sure, "Set Fire to the

Face on Fire," "Huge Gold AK-47," and "You're the Dream Unicorn!" are exciting to read, but then you listen to it and they're so serious and angry! They're not funny at all! These are misleading and dishonest song titles and that is wrong. More accurate ones would be "Meet Me at the Bar in Brooklyn" or "I'm a Screamy Young Man and I Probably Wear Sweatbands a Lot." It's just so... oh man, it's exhausting trying to care about this.
JON MCGUIRK



This band is on Vagrant? Really? Somehow I don't see fat 15-year-old Dashboard Confessional fans catching on to this dude's "genius lyrical wit" or appreciating the band's "working-class approach to rock and roll." Oh and btw, he has all the "wit" of a headline writer at the *Post* and all that other bullshit is still just a fancy way of saying "bar band." Whatever.
JESSICA RABBIT



So this is the Walkmen recreating a John Lennon record that was, in large part, a re-creation of classics in the first place. And that's all fine and well and I'm sure they had fun and drank brandy or whatever, but really, why put this out? Could it be more of a vanity project? Like I'm not even doing a piss-take, who would buy this?

TACO TOE

FUCKED UP
Hidden World
Jade Tree

If I told you a group of funny-looking, maladjusted, borderline Luddites from Canada decided to make a pop-hardcore record with nine-minute songs and it was coming out on a label that seems to like the Kinsella brothers, you'd probably rather eat your dad's scab collection than listen to it, right? Well good thing you are a scab-eating, assumption-making faggot, because I'm sitting here listening to the best hardcore record I've heard since the turn of millennium.
MARY LOUISE BUTTERS



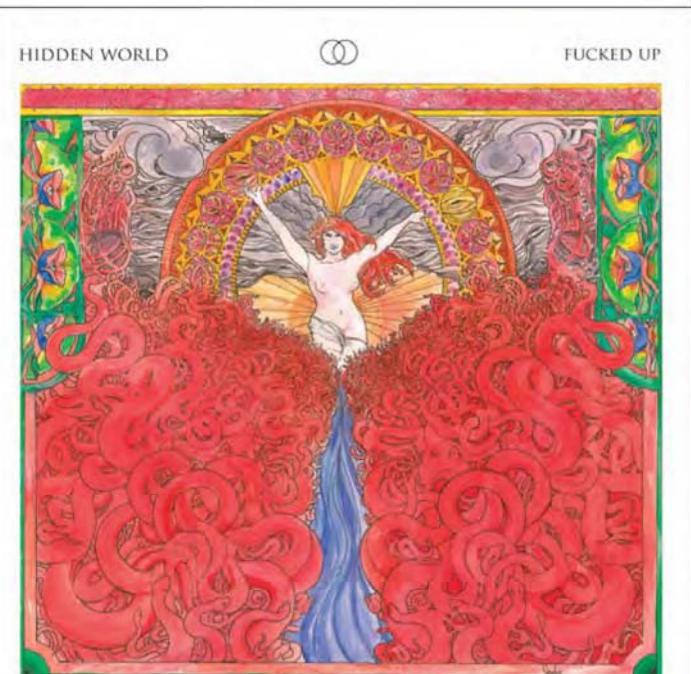
Air-drop a few thousand of these CDs over the Middle East. When the ammo runs out and the smoke clears, grown men will rip each other apart with their hands and teeth. Within days the whole place will become a blood-soaked cannibalistic wasteland that will have to be nuked from orbit, then paved over and forgotten. Seriously, come on—you think we're going to win this thing listening to Dave Matthews Band? Get your head out of your ass, hippie.
BILL O'REALLY



Caught these guys live recently and felt like my



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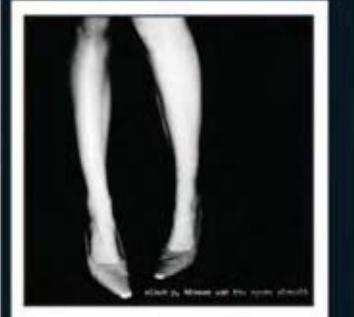
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**BEST COVER OF THE MONTH:
HOLY SHIT**



face got set on fire. I had no idea what was going on and I'm not sure the band did either. All I really remember is that the drummer played center stage and beat his floor tom with his fist for a lot of the songs, and when I got home I wanted to watch *Cops* and jerk off. I'm pretty sure I did exactly that. This record is limited to 300 copies so you might as well stop reading because you already fucking missed it.

ARTIE PHILIE



Do you crave songs that soothe and complement your unique worldview and refined (yet culturally aware) sensibilities? Do you want to be dazzled with innovative musicianship and nuanced lyrical insight pertaining to current events and social problems? Do you like "art"? Well, to be honest, you may not enjoy Cancer Kids very much. In fact I can almost guarantee that you will enjoy it considerably less than I would enjoy wiping my ass with your face. That opinion though is entirely subjective, so please take it at face value. Thanks so much.

ARTIE PHILIE



Just when hardcore music is devolving into an ooze of career-minded retardation and fake nostalgia (see also: Lifetime and Gorilla Biscuits reunions), a band like Capital gets it right. If you're sick of melodramatic little boys with expensive haircuts, SASSY CUPCAKES

you'll appreciate this unironic and straight-faced rebuke to the world that *Alternative Press* has repackaged and sold ten trillion times over. On the other hand, if you are 99.9 percent of the music population, never mind, everything's cool.

GAYBEEZ



Can we get one album that is NOT made by normal everyday people who have gotten a couple of As and a couple of Cs, broken a couple of hearts and had theirs broken, kicked around their 20s being badasses only to find out after a little bit of honest introspection that they are just normal dudes who enjoy the occasional beer and want to make a living making music? Guys, that's called "people who are not in rock bands."

VERYSERIOUS

MCHARDCOREPANTS



At first this annoyed me, like one of those homeless guitar-playing dudes on a street corner who leaves a hat on the ground to imply that you owe him for making noise that you didn't ask for. But I listened to it one more time and realized that, unlike the homeless, most of these songs are pretty clever if you're willing to pay attention. Good thing bums aren't this entertaining, otherwise I might feel guilty when I laugh at them freezing to death in the winter months.

LAMIE WHATEVERODALE



DEICIDE
The Stench of
Redemption

Earache



PARTYLINE
Zombie
Terrorist
Retard Disco

Way to dig up the corpse of Riot Grrl, slap some cat eye glasses on it, and drag it around in the mud like a depressing old marionette. How much you think I can get on eBay for my Bratmobile/Heavens to Betsy split 7"? If this is what it's come down to, I'm over it.

DIET GRRL



PORTASTATIC
Be Still Please

Merge

If you are 13 you should buy this. When your mom catches you sneaking out and grounds you and you don't get to see your boyfriend for two weeks and you scream into your pillow until your throat hurts (two screams), this will articulate everything for you. Older people might like this if their boss made them cry that day.

LAMIE WHATEVERODALE



SOFT STUFF

TK WEBB
Phantom
Parade

The Social Registry

I saw a guy taking a shit in Penn Station once. He just pulled down his pants, squatted down in full view of everyone, and got busy painting the floor brown. People walked by pretending nothing strange was happening at all, and he watched them as they passed like he was daring someone to say something. Everyone was terrified. Compared to that guy, Glen Benton is a fucking hack.

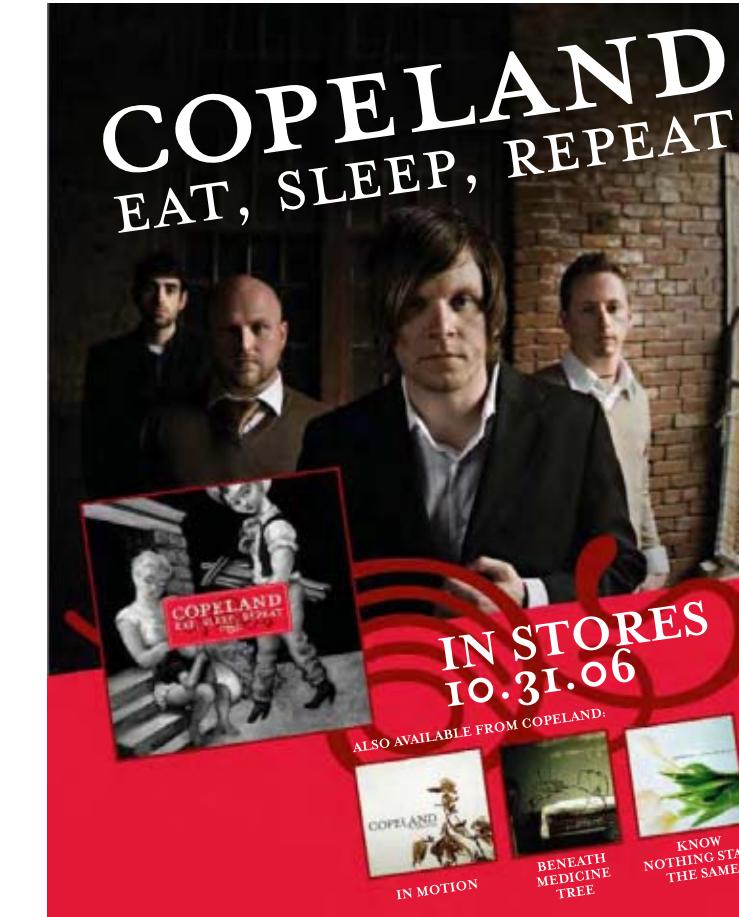
GLEN GARRY GLEN DANZIG



BERT JANSCH
The Black
Swan

Drag City

Embarrassing confession of the day: I had never heard of Bert Jansch before I got the *Squid and the Whale* soundtrack. Boy is my face red! But then I got super into all his old folk songs, especially all the Pentangle stuff. Better late than never, I guess. And now, lo and behold, the nouveau-folkies go and drag him out for a li'l comeback jam sesh. Devendra, some Espers guys, etc. You know they're all feeling pretty pleased with themselves for getting to play with one of their folk heroes. I'm trying not to let the hipness factor sour me on this, and I even like the Beth Orton vocals on here, but goddamn it, why does Devendra have to have



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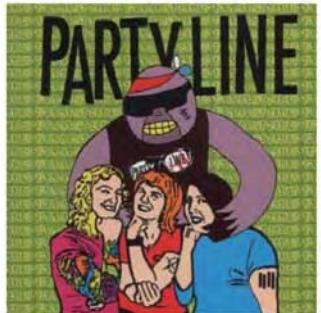
JUNIOR BOYS
SO THIS IS GOODBYE
the new album

SO THIS IS GOODBYE ISN'T JUST AN IMPROBABLE NOTCH ABOVE 2004'S *LAST EXIT*
-IT'S ALSO AMONG THE BEST RECORDS YOU'LL HEAR ALL YEAR 9.0 PITCHFORK

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SPACIOUS COLLECTION OF FLASH-FROZEN R&B AND SOFT DISCO LAMENTs..
ONE OF THE YEAR'S GREAT FULL-LENGTHS. (A) STYLUS MAGAZINE

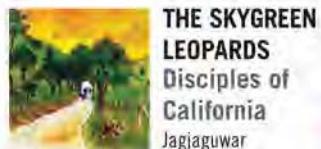
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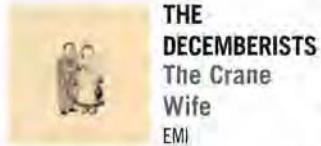


WORST COVER OF THE MONTH: PARTYLINE

his grubby little mitts all over everything even remotely related to folk music these days? Jeesh. LEZZIE MCCREWCUT



Nope, sorry. The psych-folk market is so flooded these days that shambly, rambling, sort-of songs just don't cut it anymore. From now on, you need to be able to write a memorable melody, and you need to be able to sing, like REALLY sing. Prettily, with vibrato. We've filled the guitar-guys-in-floppy-hats quota, now we need the Sandy Dennys. Where are you, Sandy Dennys? HIPPIE JOHNNY



Oh good, more nasal songs about rogues and curs and bustles. Hey, could you let us know when the Wes Anderson Fantasy Songwriting Camp lets out and you go back to being a gangly lit dork who still gets shoved by people at 30. Just a heads-up'd be nice.

KELRON CHUBBARD



Really, if you aren't running a mountainside coffee shop or hosting some sort of Appalachian radio twankathon, how much instrumental slide-guitar

music do you need? I don't mean to sound like some kind of gay "music critic" touting John Fahey, but dude did put out about 70 fucking albums. Why not just pick ten of those and be done for life? LEROY GUMPTION



The only reason I even picked this CD up is cuz there's a song on it called "Amy in the White Coat" and I am always excited to hear songs with my name in it. Sadly, there are very few songs written about Amys. There's the Pure Prairie League one they always play on classic rock stations, and there's one by Elton John on *Honky Chateau* that's kinda OK, and then there's the Frank Sinatra number that goes, "Once in love with Amy, always in love with Amy," which my 100-year-old high school science teacher used to sing to me, thereby ruining it forever. So I thought, "Hey, maybe Mr. Eyes will finally write me the gorgeous love song I so rightly deserve." Nope. It's a song about incest. Thanks a lot, dude.



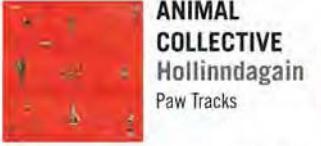
This one's kind of a no-brainer. If you are a lesbian and your musical knowledge extends no further than the Indigo Girls and Ani DiFranco, then a) say hello to your new favorite album by your new favorite green-dreadlocked womyn-loving-womyn, and b) why the hell are you reading *Vice*? But if you're not into faux-

hawks, dolphin-shaped dildos, and being, like, really angry about dudes (well, OK, who ISN'T really angry about dudes?), then super-emotional poem-songs about rape and Aileen Wuornos will probably be lost on you. (Guilty admission: I kinda liked the first song a lot, but I went to a Seven Sisters college so a certain amount of nostalgic fondness is to be expected.) SARAH LAWRENCE



Thanks Capitol, now I get to spend the rest of my day with the image of Sean playing daddy in the studio with his stupid turtle face and doughy arms all stretching up to the mic scorched into the back of my fucking brain. And Yoko smiling proudly through the little window and nodding along to the piano plodding—Jesus, I have never felt like punching myself unconscious until right now.

WEIRD STUFF



This is a recording of a live show from a few years ago, so at least it's not "accessible" enough to be plastered all over the *New Yorker* in layers of I-get-it 40-year-old jism. Ugh, I really can't tell who's worse anymore, the folkie bandwagoneers who're still lapping up this bullshit or the fathers-to-be who think a bunch self-indulgent kids banging out the same song for hours is "wild." MINCE TELLERS



LOREN CONNORS
Night Through:
Singles and Collected
Works 1976-2004
Family Vineyard

Loren Connors plays dark blues music from the future. While everyone else who's into being "sad" just re-electrocutes the corpse of Robert Johnson every couple of years, Connors pushes the blues idiom into a truly dark place. This is music of despair and joy. (You might laugh now, but just listen to it. You'll see.) IG PICKLES



**PAUL FLAHERTY-
CHRIS CORSANO**
The Beloved
Music
Family Vineyard

The pinnacle of improvised music in this day and age, right here. How many times does *Vice* have to tell you to check out this shit-hot combo, asap?

JESSE PEARSON

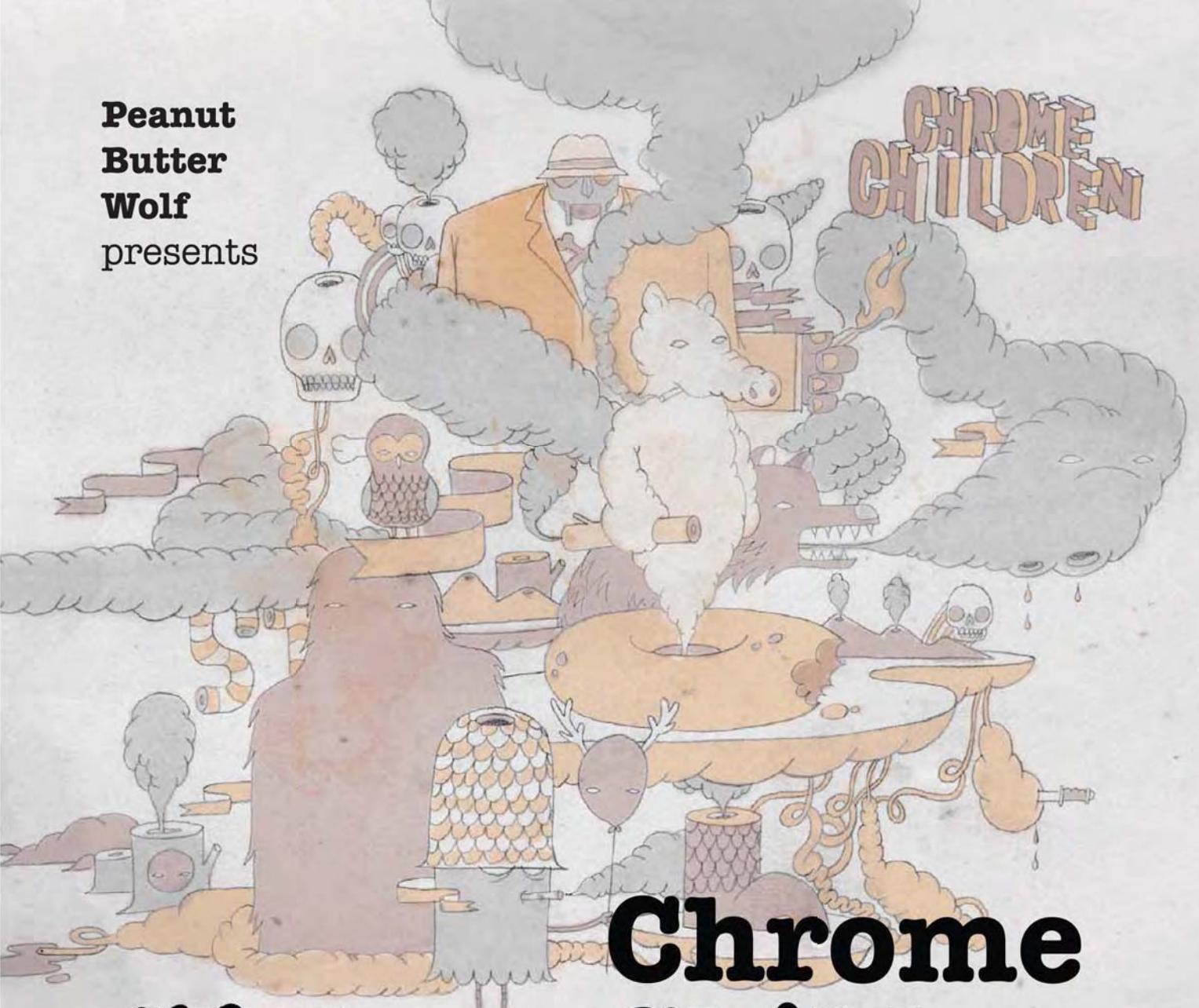


HOLY SHIT
Stranded at
Two Harbors
UUAR

This reminds me of the ideas my first boyfriend had about art, all adolescent and weird and personal. He was a good artist. This is like that but it's a lot better than what he did, which is get married and raise some cats. Good album. Good album art too—the gold cover is classy and the photo of the two dudes whose band this is (Ariel Pink and Matt Fishbeck) kissing in a field is unexpected and pretty.

T. PERFECT PISTACHIO

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Butter
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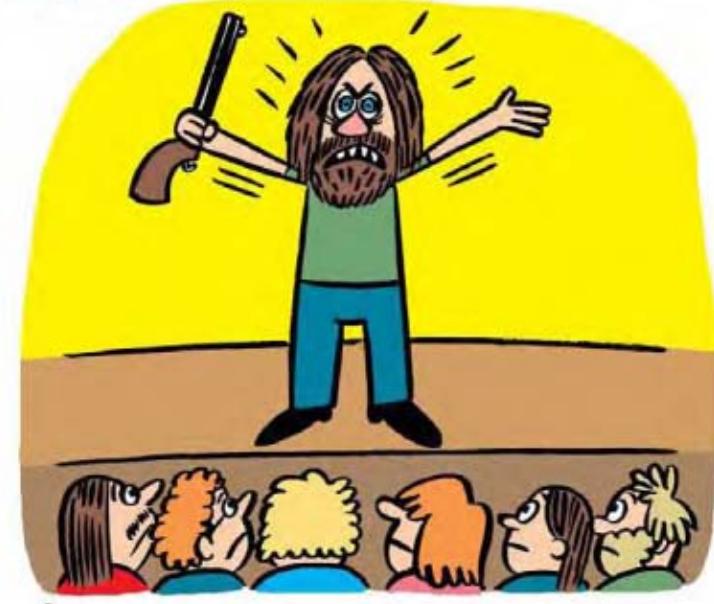
[adult swim]

Johnny Ryan's

KULT KUT-UPS



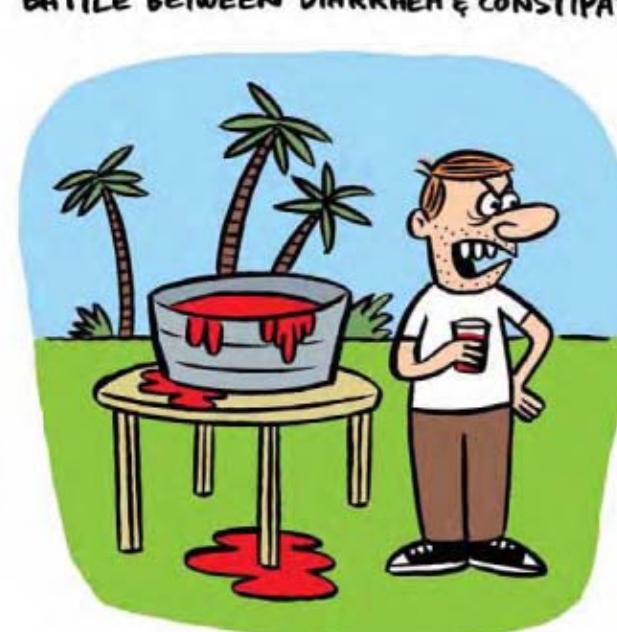
"GOD TOLD ME TO!"



"MY CHILDREN, WE MUST PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE ULTIMATE APOCALYPTIC BATTLE BETWEEN DIARRHEA & CONSTIPATION!"



"KISS MY SHITTY LIPS FOR PEACE!"



"OKAY, WHO'S THE WISEGUY WHO PEED IN THE POISONED KOO-L-AID?!"

Bob Marley AND THE WAILERS

DELUXE
Edition

CROSSWORD



Across

1. The Wailers' first album
5. "Emancipate yourself from mental _____"
7. One third of the famous handshake
8. Frequent producer and Island Records founder
11. "Your _____ is so tasty"
13. Bob Marley's birthplace
14. Original Wailer
15. One third of the famous handshake
17. He creamed his version of "I Shot the Sheriff"
18. Bob Marley's favorite sport
19. He said "kill it before it grows"
20. Bob Marley's nickname and label

Down

2. Rita Marley, Judy Mowatt and Marcia Griffiths
3. Kingston 12 a.k.a.
4. Stevie Wonder's tribute to Bob Marley
6. Bob Marley's last album
9. US R&B stars who toured with Bob Marley and the Wailers
10. Original Wailer
12. Bob performed at this country's independence ceremony
16. The Honorable Robert Nesta Marley is a member of Jamaica's Order of _____

ALEPH

CONTINUED FROM PG. 62

sides of my living room and set up a little meditation space in front of a table with some flowers and incense (I tried to hunt down some made from bilva leaves in honor of Aum's central Tibetan deity Lord Shiva, but the best I could come up with on short notice was Sublime, as in that dead fat guy's band). I found a nice full-page picture in a magazine of Asahara sitting in resplendent purple yoga robes to tape above my makeshift altar, then tore it down and got ready for some serenity.

For my first foray into meditation I decided to bypass the beginner's option recommended by the Aleph website, "This Body Is Impure" (a little obvious, right?), and pour myself straight into "The Suffering When Senses Become Weak."

The instructions for this guy are pretty straightforward: "Imagine that you have lost your eyesight and have suddenly become unable to see beautiful scenarios, the faces of the people you love; you cannot read newspapers or your favorite comics or watch TV. A strong desire arises within you that you want to see these things badly. Continue to meditate until you feel an unbearable pain."

Swaddling myself in a bedsheets, I shut my eyes and gave it a go. As far as I can tell I never quite hit "unbearable pain," but after what felt like a good hour or two, I started to feel a little sad at all the great things I was missing out on vision-wise. That suddenly gave way to a sensation that felt like a really intense caffeine jag as my mind started drifting to how awesome the rest of my senses were going to be now that I was blind. I figured this must be the whole point of the exercise and triumphantly opened my eyes only to find I'd been out a whopping 18 minutes. Not only that, but when I checked back at the site, I discovered that the actual purpose of the meditation was to make me realize "what has given me pleasure has now become the cause of my suffering," and that I should "detach myself from the attachment of my senses" to avoid this pain. I was fucking way off.

I sent out another round of emails, this time grounding my interest more specifically

in the desire to "awaken dormant abilities in my mind and psyche." When Aum first started back in the 80s, its whole focus was on pulling in young *otaku* with the promise of levitation and psychic powers, and accordingly they advertised in the back of UFO zines (the whole apocalyptic Buddhism slant only came after Shoko's first brush with the Book of Revelation. Nice one, Christianity). Since earnest enthusiasm wasn't winning me any points with these Japs, I decided an open appeal to nostalgia might be in order. There's currently a slow-boiling schism in the group between old-school devotees of Asahara and Joyu's legitimacy-oriented faction (though critics say this fracture is just a facade engineered to let them have their cake and gas it too). If I couldn't plead my way into the sect proper, maybe a splinter group would take me on.

As another week passed with no word from the East, I started to feel the first pangs of disenchantment with Aleph. Sure, it was fun fantasizing about stumbling upon some tiny Manhattan enclave and being locked in a sensor-equipped meditation chamber until I could reduce my brain waves and breathing patterns to those of the Grandmaster (or simply the enlightened ideal should I end up in Joyu's party), but it was becoming clearer and clearer that in reality these guys' ship had long since sailed. They may still freak out the squares in Japan, but is that really saying much in a culture that still considers rockabilly the height of rebellion?

I was already finding myself too occupied on a nightly basis with Adidam, the Moonies, and this other cult I joined but am not at liberty to chat about on a nightly basis to keep on Aleph's ass, and on top of that I couldn't even get my hands on a copy of any of Master Shoko's teachings without some sort of special permit from the New York Public Library. Shit, I couldn't even eBay a fucking CD-R of his astral music to put on during meditation.

Finally I decided to stop pussyfooting around with Aleph and dive straight into classic Aum as best I knew how. While I was unable to pull off such hallowed rites as being beaten karmaless with bamboo rods and drinking Shoko's dirty bathwater due to lack of fellow enthusiasts and supply, respec-

tively, I could partake in thermotherapy, which simply involves submersing yourself in scalding hot water for a couple of hours.

Monitoring its temp with a meat thermometer, I added kettle after kettle of boiling water to my bath until it hit a toasty 200°. After a couple of false starts, in which I hesitantly lowered a toe just into the surface of the steaming water, I determined there was no such thing as spiritual gain without a leap of faith and, sitting on the rim, stuck both legs in at the same time.

Holy shit was this the worst idea ever. There was about half a second of vague discomfort where you almost have a chance to go, "Wow, this isn't bad at all," before the pain hits in full, then interestingly enough, about half a second of reprieve once you pull them out where you just manage to think, "Whew, well at least I got out of there in time," before the wrenching aftersting kicks in. I wrapped my cherry-red calves in damp towels for the night and by the morning they'd managed to get back down to a healthy, swollen shade of pink. It was really beginning to hit home that not only was Aum/Aleph not going to bend over backward to get me involved but I might not be cut out for it in the first place.

I had one last option: Using David Kaplan's *The Cult at the End of the World* as my guide, I managed to track down the address for Aum's old NY digs. Hoping that who or whatever resided there now might at least have a forwarding address or somebody's number, I tried giving the building a call but kept getting a busy signal. Since that would seem to indicate that there's still a phone line intact, I decided to stake it out on foot. Ditching out on Moonie church (resulting in several increasingly urgent voice mails from Dana) I walked up to 48th Street and Fifth Avenue but found only a really crappy-looking psychic named Chloe with a particle-board sign. I poked my head in her door and said, "Hi, I'm looking for Aleph." "Alf?" she said with one of those tweaky, what-are-you-talking-about? faces. "No, I'm sorry A-leph, like the yoga group? Used to be Aum?" "What? Do you want a reading?"

That was it for me. Fuck you Aleph, I never wanted to be in your stupid cult anyway.
THOMAS MORTON



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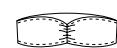
Lamé Cycle Short



Lamé Hot Short



Lamé Triangle Top



Lamé Rouched Tube Bra



Lamé Halter Bodysuit